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THE GREAT REFUSAL

AND OTHER SERMONS

BY

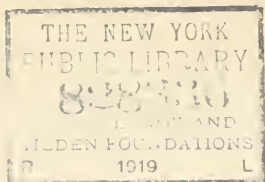
JOHN W. CHADWICK

NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH SERIES

BOSTON

GEO. H. ELLIS, 141 FRANKLIN STREET

1895



828.520
L. B. AND
ALDEN FOUNDATIONS
1919

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THE FRIENDSHIP OF RELIGIONS.

WHILE I was writing my sermon yesterday morning (October 7) there came to me a letter from Dr. Furness, now in his ninety-second year, in which, with many bright and pleasant things, he told me how he had been preaching in a Quaker meeting-house older than himself, and how a Presbyterian minister was ready to invite him to preach for him when his people would let him, and then added: "I am more thankful than I can tell that I have come clearly to see the kingdom of heaven coming independently of all diverse symbols, modes of thought, etc. Is it not evident? Are not you and I one in the faith that the one religion pure and perfect is fidelity to all the relations in which we are placed to one another and the world around, these relations being God's religious institutions?" When you have heard my sermon, I think you will agree with me that these words of my dear friend, in whom

"Old experience doth attain
To something of prophetic strain,"

furnish my sermon with as good a text as I could find.

Some of you have been more fortunate than I in being able to attend the meetings of the Parliament of Religions which has recently been held in Chicago, in connection with the great Exposition. Some of you, I know, were much impressed by those meetings; and other friends have done their best to make me unhappy by writing me how much I lost. But I have not lost so much as they imagine. I have not seen the picturesque variety presented by a platform in which the decent black of the American and European Prot-

estant served for a background to the brighter colors of the Asiatic Brahman and Buddhist in their various robes, and to ecclesiastics, Greek and Roman, in their splendid decorations. It must have been a most impressive and imposing spectacle. But the merely æsthetic and dramatic aspect of the occasion must have been, however entertaining, the least important aspect of the scene. In truth, I think that nothing in the whole scope of the great Exposition marked the advance made in the world's history since the discovery of America so clearly and decidedly, and I will add so grandly, as the Parliament of Religions, the meeting of so many Christian sects and the representatives of so many of the world's great religions, not with swords and fagots and pincers and other instruments of death and torture in their hands, but only at the worst a manuscript too long and soporific to entrance the willing mind ; and not with mutual curses on their lips, but with kindly greetings and with interchanges of enlightened thought and mutual appreciation. I do not expect that you will all agree with me. God is great, and steam and electricity are his prophets for the most of you ; but I cannot withhold my own opinion and conviction that here was something bigger than the Ferris wheel, brighter than the electrical illuminations, more liberal than the liberal arts, more beautiful than the never-to-be-forgotten beauty of the White City as a whole, as one sees it from some coigne of vantage. And, when I say this, I do not forget that, when the sons of God came together, Satan came also among them, as he generally does,—that there were those, like Joseph Cook, who came there to “get an inning,” not in the mood of sympathy, but in the mood of antagonism and hate and scorn. But these did not represent the average temper of the meeting. Many there were, no doubt, who thought it a good chance to say a word for their own sect to a wider audience than they commonly get, and one whose agreement they could not anticipate. It is a great trouble with our preaching generally, our doctrinal preaching, that the people for whom it is intended are not there to hear. It would

help things mightily if now and then we could play "kitchen furniture," and change pulpits all around. But it is good to know that the Parliament was no mush of concession. Anything is better than that. I have not forgotten with what fine contempt Dr. Hall, of Holy Trinity, once spoke of the mutual toleration of Orthodox and Unitarians who believed very much alike. It is like tolerating your natural face in a glass. What we want, he said, is toleration of the frankest difference. Yes, that is what we want, or rather we want no toleration, which implies a certain condescension to foreigners, but the understanding that every man who has fashioned his thought bravely and honestly has just as good a right to his opinion as any other man who has done the same thing.

But to return to my thesis: Nothing in the whole scope of the Exposition to mark the progress of mankind since the discovery of America so clearly as the Parliament of Religions. It is a thesis that can easily be made good. For what was the mutual temper of the different religions four hundred years ago, or, at any rate, the temper of Christianity, regarding the others, great and small? It was, "Believe as I do, or I will kill you," or "I will torture you until you do." Then Christianity in Western Europe was a unit; for in 1492 Luther was only eight years old, and was being so unmercifully flogged at home and at school that he resolved to be a monk and flog himself with less liberality and more discrimination. But when, thanks to his courage, the Protestant Revolution was an accomplished fact, the mutual regards of the two sections were not more affectionate than those of the different religions of the world had been before. Calvin, "the Genevan turn-spit," as Dr. Holmes has called him with his usual felicity, burned Michael Servetus for a difference of opinion that would not be appreciated by the inquisitors of the New York *Observer* at the present time; and, indeed, it seems for an opinion that was not a little less, but a little more, orthodox than his own. But the noticeable thing is that there was a general chorus of assent through-

out the Protestant world, to which the gentle Melancthon was fain to join his piping note. And then for a century and a half and more (that was in 1553) the Catholics went on persecuting the Protestants, and the Protestants the Catholics, and the Episcopalians the Presbyterians, the Independents, and the Baptists, and the Independents the Quakers and the Unitarians, and so on. The last English burning for heresy was less than two centuries ago, that of the Unitarian Bartholomew Legate. There has been a good deal of persecution all around since then, and some of it has been meaner than the vivi-cremation, and has hurt quite as much: but at the same time there has been steadily increasing a mutual tolerance, passing into a mutual sympathy and appreciation, of which the Chicago Parliament is, so far, the most conspicuous sign, though there are hundreds of other signs which, in their aggregation, are much more important. They are the breaking down in hundreds of communities, East and West in our own country, of the old walls of separation, so that ministers of the different sects are welcome to each other's pulpits, and meet in friendly conference, and unite in many offices of social help and cheer.

But what I wish to speak of more particularly is the change that has been going on in Christian bodies with regard to the non-Christian bodies of believers, and especially those of which we speak as the great religions of the world. There has hardly been a time when there has not been here and there somebody rich enough in spiritual apprehension to do justice to the exceptional greatness of certain moral and religious leaders of the pagan world. You see that in Dante's treatment of such leaders in his vision of the infernal and the purgatorial things. It is Virgil who is his guide down through the terraced cone of hell and up the purifying stairs. You see it in Raphael's "School of Athens," and in the docility with which Pico and other scholars of the Renaissance turned to Plato as to a new revelation. And did not the scholastics of the Middle Ages sit at the feet of Aristotle almost as reverently as at the feet of

Christ? But, until very recently, it was left for the heretics to appreciate the good of heathendom; and there was no surer sign of heresy than for a man to say a good word for any of the ancient scriptures not included in the Old Testament and New. I think it may be said, without boasting or immodesty, that it was among the Unitarians that the sympathetic attitude first began to show itself, undeterred by the contumely heaped upon Taylor, the English Platonist, who was reputed to have sacrificed a bull to Jupiter in his chamber, and to have ruined the ceiling and best carpet of his landlady's parlor by that solemn function. And among the Unitarians it was the "suspects," those of the more radical sort,—Lydia Maria Child, in her "Origin and Development of Religious Ideas," Emerson and Samuel Johnson and Samuel Longfellow,—who were the first to show a sympathetic interest in the non-Christian books. In general, the Transcendentalists had a very sunny exposure to the Orient beams. In those times the Unitarian conservative never read from the Apocrypha or took his text from it; and it used to be whispered of Longfellow, when he was preaching here, and Johnson and Higginson and Weiss, "Why, he reads from the Apocrypha," or "He takes his text from the Apocrypha," as if it were a very doubtful thing, and not to be allowed. That the Apocrypha was sandwiched in between the Old Testament and New did not save its reputation. The truth was plainly apprehended that it was Hellenic, and not Hebraic, in its conspicuous parts; and it was understood that Revelation was entirely an Hebraic matter, though it might, as in the New Testament, adopt the vehicle of Hellenic speech.

The differentiation of the other great religions of the world from Christianity has taken various forms. They have been distinguished from it as natural from revealed, as false from true, as man's effort after God *versus* God's reaching out to men, as the same in kind, but hopelessly inferior in degree. Besides, there have been various mixtures of these different views. For the most part, those who have despised the non-

Christian religions as merely natural have at the same time reprobated them as false or wicked, taking their cue from Old Testament descriptions of the Canaanitish worships. But a good many, taking the line of Saint Augustine and the English Deists, have declared "Christianity as old as the creation," and have been delighted to show that God has never left himself without a witness, that in all ages, entering into holy souls, he has made them sons of God and prophets.

Such a view as this is not inconsistent with the belief that Christianity and Judaism are special revelations, and distinguished as such from all the other great religions. But, to the candid student, this belief is no more acceptable than the Ptolemaic astronomy or the geography of the early Greeks. Even if the claim of the Old Testament and New to be special, supernatural revelations were entirely clear, it would be a claim no more self-justifying than the similar claims of the Hindu and Iranian scriptures. But the claim of the Old Testament and New to be special supernatural revelations is not clearly made out. The texts that are quoted to this effect do not once in a hundred times, if ever, apply to the whole Bible. The most of them were written before the Bible was complete, before a word of the New Testament was written. But, if every book in either Testament put forth the claim, not only for itself but for the Bible as a whole, it could not be made good in the face of what we know about the natural history of the Bible, know of the process by which the books which now constitute the Bible drifted together in the course of some nine hundred or a thousand years, how they were edited and re-edited, arranged and rearranged, changed, abridged, augmented, to suit the exigencies of succeeding times. To differentiate Christianity from the other great religions, as a religion supernaturally revealed from those not so, is an impossible task. Any proof of such a character would carry along with it the proof that the other great religions were every whit as much revealed and every whit as supernatural as that.

The growing consciousness that this is so has driven many

Christian advocates to the position that the Bible is not itself a supernatural revelation, but is the record of one,—a record not inerrant, but abounding in mistakes. But this position is not more tenable than the other. There is not a fact or line in either Testament to differentiate Christianity from the other great religions of the world in the general method of its production and development. And nothing is more pitiful than the ingenuity with which many liberals, Orthodox and Unitarian, go to work to show that Christianity was a revelation in some special sense never intended by its old-time apologists. The thing has gone; but they would save the name. "They have stretched out their hands to save the sifted sediment of a residuum." It is not worth the saving; and, the sooner we have done with such devices for seeming to mean what we do not really mean, the better it will be for all concerned.

But, if Christianity cannot be distinguished from the other great religions as a supernatural revelation, from those merely natural, still less, if possible, can it be distinguished from them as true from false. There is not a lofty sentiment or a noble aspiration in the Bible which cannot be paralleled in the religious literature of China or India or Persia or Egypt or Greece or Rome,—it would hardly be extravagant to say in all of them simultaneously and together. I never shall forget the quiet and effective manner of Emerson at a meeting of the Free Religious Association, when some bumptious individual had been declaiming to the effect that in the teachings of Jesus we have this, that, and the other wonderful precept or injunction not to be found in the ancient writings of non-Christian peoples. "To make this statement," said Mr. Emerson, "is but to show how narrowly we have read." It is not that here and there we have a sentence that can bear undimmed the light of the New Testament. It is that there are hundreds and thousands of sentences that can easily do this. One of the best statements of this matter ever written is Colonel Higginson's "Sympathy of Religions." It was written in 1856. It is as good as ever, but it

could be enriched indefinitely from the studies which have since been made by a great company of laborious scholars. The Old Testament is rich in the expression of devout sentiments; but in what Psalm or prophecy does it reach a loftier height than in the Hymn of Cleanthes, written three hundred years before Christ, when a great many of the Psalms were still unwritten? Or where in the Old Testament or New will you find a prayer more beautiful than this? "Praise to the good God, the Beloved, the Ancient of heavens, the oldest of the earth, Lord of Eternity, the maker everlasting. He is the causer of pleasure and light, maker of grass for cattle and of fruitful trees for man, causing the fish to live in the river and the birds to fill the air, lying awake when all men sleep to find out the good for his creatures. We worship thy spirit who alone hast made us; we whom thou hast made thank thee that thou hast given us birth; we give thee praises for thy mercy to us." Yet this was written in Egypt before Moses was born; and from the same period we have a soul pleading before its judges in another world,—“I am not a doer of wrong: I am not a robber, I am not a murderer, I am not a liar; I do not cause others' tears to flow.” The ten commandments do not overtop the height of that. And if, as is now so much insisted, belief in a future life is essential to religion, there it was a thousand years and more before the development of that belief in Jewish thought. It is true that with the best in the great non-Christian religions there is much that is puerile and absurd, much that is monstrous and grotesque. But this is true, though in a less degree, of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. And this does not affect the general contention with which I am now engaged, that no distinction of Christianity from the other great religions as true from false is admissible, seeing that every loftiest sentiment and noblest aspiration of the Bible can be paralleled in other scriptures of the ancient world.

The distinction of Christianity from the other great religions as a religion of God seeking men from a religion of men seeking God is little more than the sentimental and

poetic way of restating the difference as one of revealed religion on the one hand and natural upon the other, and can as little be maintained as that. There is nothing that can be described as man's seeking God outside of Judaism and Christianity which does not appear equally in both of these religions, and there is nothing in these which can be rightfully described as God's seeking men which does not equally appear in the other great religions. All religions are one form or another of man's search for God; and all religions equally are God's seeking for his children, seeing that there is no impulse in them which is not in its last analysis an impulse from God. "It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do."

We have another form of differentiation. It is a great favorite with the liberals who wish to make their motley as much like the conservatives' as possible. It is the differentiation as higher and lower, better and worse. Sometimes it is worked the other way. You will find Christian writers, or writers to the Christian manner born, doing their best to maximize every good thing outside of Christianity, and to minimize every good thing inside. They remind me of the man at Brook Farm, of whom Ripley said to Parker, "There is your accomplished friend ——: he will hoe corn all Sunday if I would let him, but all Massachusetts could not make him do it on Monday." Work it either way, and it is a poor business. Seeking to make out a superiority on either side, you will never get at the plain, honest truth of things, never see things as they are. Very near home, in James Freeman Clarke's "Ten Great Religions," we have had a striking example of what I cannot but think a vicious method. The underlying argument of his book is that Christianity is a *pleroma*; that is to say, a fulness, which includes everything that is excellent in all the other great religions with none of their defects. It would have been all right if he had come upon this conception at the end of his studies; but I greatly fear that he took up with it at the beginning, and warped somewhat the facts to fit his theory,—buried his bone and

then dug it up again. With the same ingenuity, no doubt, a Hindu or a Parsee could have shown that *his* religion was a *pleroma*, the big spider in the spider's web that decorates the cover of Dr. Clarke's book, all the other religions so many flies that are to fatten his superiority.

But, some of you may ask, Do not the different religions really differ as higher and lower, better and worse? It is a question much more easily asked than answered. It seems to me that the proportion of wheat to chaff is much greater in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures than in any others. It seems to me that the personality of Jesus is infinitely more engaging than the personality of Confucius or Mohammed or Buddha. Zoroaster, or Zarathustra, as they call him nowadays, is too remote for a comparison. But probably neither of these things appears to be so to the Mohammedan, Buddhist, or Confucian, as well qualified to judge as I am in the matter. And this, not only because of the bias of affection and association, but because their central personality, their great religious teacher, is bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh. What is betterness in religion? It is nothing absolute: it is something relative. Would Phillips Brooks's religion, as he preached it from the pulpit of his beautiful Trinity, have been any better for the negroes of the rice swamps and the cotton fields than that of their own Methodist exhorters? It would not have been half so good. Half! not a hundredth part! What could our administration of religion here do for the multitude of people who worship at the end of the next block? Less a good deal than theirs could do for us. I never get into the tide of the great happy swarm that comes surging out of St. Peter's every Sunday morning just at my hour without thanking God that these people also have their symbol of religion, and that, irrational and tawdry though it be, it is a symbol and a picture of the reality and seriousness of human life, of the goodness of God in the land of the living and beyond the gates of death, of the beauty of divine compassion, of the exigencies of a moral law. Things are good that serve a useful end. Whether a

grand piano is better than a dredging shovel depends on what you want to do,—evoke an excellent music or dredge a muddy dock. You will get no music out of your shovel, no dredging out of your piano. The religions of the lowest races are better for those races than the religion of Martineau and Frothingham and Potter. The religious instincts of humanity in one respect are like the green-eyed monster jealousy,—“they make the meat they feed on.” They fashion the religions of the world according to the needs of men at different stages of their growth. And it is not as if any expression of religion were an expression of the absolute reality. At the best, we are only trying to say something,—not saying it right out sufficiently and perfectly. Our symbol may be a more refined and delicate symbol than some others, but it is a symbol still. And this ought to gender in our minds a wholesome modesty, and to lay a hushing finger on our lips.

There were a good many people at the Parliament of Religions who saw the heavens opened, and beheld a vision of the religion of the future, in which there should be an end of all sectarian names and divisions,—no more Presbyterians or Methodists, no more Christians or Buddhists, but one great, all-including body of believers. That is a vision which has for me no particular attractions. It is as impracticable as the dream of a universal republic, and quite as undesirable as that. I cherish a better and more reasonable hope. It is that, with little or no diminution of the present multiplicity of sects and households of belief and faith, we may come into an ever larger sympathy, each cultivating our own little patch with loving and assiduous care, but each rejoicing in the others' flowers and fruitage, not always harping on their barrenness and weeds; taking down all the fences, but allowing the ancient landmarks to remain; loyal to our own traditions, reverent of all those that others cherish with a glowing heart. At the same time, if we have a noble confidence in our ideas and beliefs, we must do what we can to lead those who do not now to see how true and beautiful

they are, how noble and inspiring, how sweet and grand. We must do this in persuasive words, and much more with persuasive deeds, seeing to it that our walk and conversation show that our ideas and beliefs are no barren virgins, but fruitful mothers of fair-featured, large-limbed purposes and actions, strong for the doing of brave things and the building up of God's eternal kingdom among men. And we must do these things not that we may have dominion over men's faith, but that we may be helpers of their joy. If those whom we can cheer and brighten can conscientiously and happily remain in their old homes, so much the better: if they cannot, then let them be thrice welcome to our table and our hearth. But it is a matter of vastly more importance that we make our life true and deep than that we have bigger sheep-folds and a greater multitude of sheep. So, not to-morrow, and not soon, shall come to pass the prophecy of one who saw in mystic vision

“A temple, neither pagod, mosque, nor church,
But loftier, simpler, always open door'd
To every breath from heaven, and Truth and Peace
And Love and Justice came and dwelt therein,”

and that of him who said, “It shall have heaven and earth for its beams and rafters; science for symbol and illustration; it will fast enough gather beauty, music, picture, poetry.”

“King, bells in unrequited steeples,
The joy of unborn peoples!
Sound, trumpets far off blown,
Your triumph is our own

“Parcel and part of all,
We keep the festival,
Foretaste the good to be
And share the victory.”

THE TREASURES OF DARKNESS.

As many of you as attended to my Scripture reading (Isaiah xlv.) must have admired the rich, sonorous phrase, "I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches in secret places"; and you must have noticed that the words in their connection were nothing in the world but the prophet's promise, speaking for his god to Cyrus, to give him, as the conqueror of Babylon, the treasures of gold and silver that had been hidden away in dark and secret places, like the art treasures of the Louvre during the siege of Paris. Exactly what was promised came to pass. Such a fulfilment of a prophecy could not be thought remarkable, even if it had followed it; but, as Babylon was appropriated by Cyrus in 538 B.C., and Isaiah, from the fortieth chapter to the sixty-seventh, was written from 540 to 536, it is quite possible that we have here a prophecy after the event. We have many such in the Old Testament, and they are much more exact than those endeavoring to anticipate the course of history. Such being the original meaning of the text, it is evident that, with that meaning, it concerns us about as little as any text from Genesis to Revelation. What do we care for any plunder found in Babylon 2,430 years ago? But, of any thousand Christian people, how many do you suppose habitually associate the words "treasures of darkness" and "hidden riches in secret places" with the great Cyrus and his conquest of Babylon? Not twenty of them all. The words have come to be suggestive and symbolical of spiritual things,—of treasures hidden in the darkness of God's dealings with his children, of riches which the secret places of his providence and of their own experience conceal.

Treasures of darkness! The words suggest a wide, im-

perial range of human dealing with the wonder and the mystery of the world, with the products of its literature and art, with what one has called "the abysmal deeps of personality," with the tremendous facts of sorrow, sin, and death. The darkness which each night envelopes the half-earth, with all its populous cities and its pleasant villages and quiet fields, is, with the treasures that it hides, a symbol of the darkness that envelopes with its casual or perennial obscurity the intellectual and moral world in which we live and move and have our being. Think for a moment of the treasures hidden in the physical darkness which the descending sun draws down, as if it were a trailing curtain over sea and land. It proves the poet's saying that the sun is but a morning star; for, as the darkness deepens, light after light comes out in the deep blue-black spaces of the sky, till

"the welkin above is all bright,
All throbbing and panting with stars," —

millions of them shining there, and millions more moving unseen around them and among them in the awful deep; or that bit of fleecy cloud, or what seemed so at high noon, seemingly so transparent that it only veiled and could not hide the perfect sky beyond, turns out, when darkness falls, to be the moon herself, by her soft radiance putting out the light of all except the strongest stars in heaven. Should any say that these treasures which the night reveals are treasures of light rather than of darkness, it is enough for me that till the darkness comes they do not deliver their celestial beauty to the eye and heart. But it is not as if I had exhausted my treasures of physical darkness by these glorious counts; nor as if I could not easily afford to let them go, so much remains behind. The "night-side of nature" is a favorite theme of pessimistic disquisition, which means by that the hard, uncanny side, the rapacities and malignities of animal life, the enormous energy of the parasitic world, and the murderous plants that eke out their sustenance by entrapping and assimilating the insects that

so trustfully appeal to them for their honeyed food. But the night side of nature has another meaning that is very sweet and good. It has been brought out delightfully by a poet-artist of our time, a denizen of our own city.* The treasures of darkness that have been revealed to him, patiently listening and waiting for the mystery to be shown, are all manner of soft murmuring sounds and brooding silences, and so much going on that even a rude man, which our friend is not, might be well satisfied; for Goethe says, you know, that "the rude man likes to see something going on." And, then, there is the human aspect of the matter, which appealed so differently to Carlyle and Thackeray. In the range of literature I hardly know of two more interesting passages than those which these men wrote about the things on which the darkness lies in a great city. For Carlyle it was as if the hidden things were only base and mean and fierce and tragical; while for Thackeray the solemn mantle fell upon a thousand tender, sweet, and holy things, fidelities of patient watching and of happy love.

"Dear God, the very houses seem asleep,
And all that mighty heart is lying still."

If there were no other treasure of darkness than this wonderfully strange and marvellous one which we call sleep, of which Shakspeare and Sidney have sung the loveliest things, — "sleep which knits up the ravelled sleeve of care," "the certain knot of peace," "the balm of woe," "the poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release," but which is itself a poem such as no human poet ever sung, — if there were no treasure of darkness but this only, what riches it would hold! and how eagerly ten thousand times ten thousand hearts might daily sing, as Shelley sang: —

"Swiftly walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night.
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where all the long and lone daylight

* Mr. Hamilton Gibson.

Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear
Which make thee terrible and dear,
Swift be thy flight."

And, as a jewelled casket may contain things fairer than itself, and things of greater cost, so does this mystery of sleep, this treasure of the darkness, its ebony inlaid with stars and dreams, contain things far more precious than itself, more precious than forgetfulness of former pain, even renewal of our heart and life, strength to go forth again to our labor till the evening, a new beginning with each fresh awakening. Ay, and the sleepless eyes see riches hidden by the garish day,—if sometimes infinite distortion of realities, at others the realities themselves, the actual verities of the inner life, the hidden fault, the secret shame, making the darkness all aflame with stinging accusation, showing us to ourselves as in a mirror, naked in our deformity of word and deed; but equally, thank God, visions of dear remembered joy, memories of truth and purity and mutual tenderness, that make our sleepless pillow a delight, and all the darkness rustle as with angels' wings.

But, if I dwell so long upon the symbol, the mere physical darkness, and the treasures which it hides, I shall have no time to speak of those things of which it is the type and the foreshadowing. I am sure that nothing could be easier than to spend all my brief half-hour upon the outward thing—flower-like, it opens so many fragrant petals, row beyond delicate row, and then the glowing heart. But what I wish to signalize, and to impress upon you, is that the things that we have seen so far are all a type and a foreshadowing of things upon the spiritual plane, the darkness there, as well, a treasure-house of rare and perfect things. Out of a hundred illustrations that will crowd upon me, I can choose but three or four; and, first of all, I will ask you to consider the darkness of our ignorance of the past, and what treasures have been given to us already out of that, what hidden riches have already been discovered in the shell-heaps of comparative language and comparative relig-

ion, and by the archæologist unearthing ancient things of architecture and warfare and domestic use, and by the anthropologist burrowing in caves and kitchen-middens and lake-bottoms where the lake villagers once built in their astonishing, fantastic way.

So has the early history of mankind been partially recovered, not a history of names and wars and dynasties, but a history of progress in the arts of civilization. And the experience of the race has been lengthened out some half a million years into the past, and its affinities with lower races have been declared; and the long way that it has come is found to be the trumpet of a prophecy of the long way it has to go. Give us another half a million years, and who knows but we may have towns and cities almost as beautiful as the forests which our civilization has destroyed, industry without poverty, and politics without spoils, and religion without juggling creeds? What an intellectual treasure is the affinity of nations which the affinities of language has brought out, and what a moral treasure the affinity of religions elucidated by the science of comparative religion! I know it is a treasure of which many do not yet appreciate the worth. They say it means impoverishment, the loss of what they valued most,—their sense of being the elect of God, their enjoyment of a special supernatural religion, differing not in degree only, but in kind, from all the other great religions of the world. In truth, it does destroy this foolish pride, this vain conceit; and so far it is impoverishment. But it declares the sympathy of religions; it makes of one spiritual blood all nations of men who dwell on the face of the earth; it admits us to the hidden riches in the secret places of other sacred scriptures and of our own as never heretofore. It is only a little while that men have been engaged with any intellectual seriousness in studying the nearer and remoter past, and such treasures have they already brought forth out of the darkness that we are entitled to be full of hope as to those things which still remain to be revealed. Already the known history of the past, the known experience

of the growing race, is a hundred times more interesting and inspiring than it was a century ago. And what is true of the history of the race is true of the history of the planet, and the history of the solar system, and the sidereal universe, treasures of such wonderful beauty have the astronomer and the geologist and the zoölogist found in the darkness of that ignorance which formerly enveloped all their spheres of thought. Consider that almost everything which we now call science was a few centuries ago hidden in impenetrable darkness. Consider with what patience and long suffering all of this treasure has been brought forth into the light of day, and how wonderful it is. What in comparison—the mere dust of the balance!—were the staggering wains of jewelled garments, and the cups and vases and great ornaments of beaten gold, which Cyrus had delivered to him at the gate of Babylon?

And to think that all of this was hidden from men's minds, and had no meaning for their hearts only a few centuries ago,—that all of it was then the treasures of darkness! What promise and what potency is here! What treasures of knowledge must not the darkness of the future hide! There are those who think that all the great things of science have already been discovered. What discoveries can there be in the future to match the splendors of Darwin's natural selection, Newton's attraction of gravitation, and Copernicus's displacement of the earth by the sun as the centre of our system? There may be some brushing up around the corners, some clearing up of small, subsidiary things; but of great discoveries there will be no more. But so imagined those who lived before Darwin and Newton and Copernicus; and yet these great ones plunged into the darkness and came forth, bringing their treasures in their hands. The thing that has been will be. There are those sitting here who may not taste of death till they have seen treasures emerging out of our present darkness as magnificent as any of the greatest of the past. If not so soon, then, soon or late, these things will surely come. There is more light yet

to break out from God's word,—his word whose text is neither Greek nor Hebrew, but universal, vital, and organic, the whole infinity of the natural and human world.

“If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.”

That couplet-ending of Shakspeare's sonnet of “The Marriage of True Minds” makes easy my transition to another aspect of my thought, another illustration of the truth I celebrate. For I remember well enough the first time I read the Shakspeare sonnets that they were almost next to nothing in my eyes. Here and there I found a phrase of beauty or of power; but, for the most part, had I been honest, I should have confessed they were to me a labor and a weariness. But it is very different now, when I have read them many times, each time with heightening appreciation and more fond delight. Now, of the one hundred and fifty-four, I count full half that are to me immeasurable gain, while many another has some happy part or line or phrase; and, though I could not say it for myself, I have come to understand the judgment of a friend,—that, if he had to give up the sonnets or the plays, he would not let the sonnets go. Forgive so personal an illustration; but is it merely personal to me? Is it not of a piece with a great deal of your experience as well as mine with intellectual and æsthetic things? How prone we are, if we do not like a thing, and do not like it at the first blush, to scornfully dismiss it as of no mortal good!

Of all the things most precious to us now in literature or art, how many were at first treasures of darkness, treasures that we did not recognize or could not find! We said, perhaps, that we did not care for Browning; then we allowed that he had written a few things worth cherishing; then the number grew till it became a dozen or a score; and now how foolish and perverse seems our first judgment to our full enjoyment of his glorious scope! Others have had the same experience with Emerson. “My girls understand him,” said

the gigantic Jeremiah Mason, of the New Hampshire bar, "but *I* can't," and thought, "So much the worse for Emerson," no doubt; but it was only so much the worse for him. The history of many a great reputation is the history of a stern apprenticeship of long neglect or half-appreciation. What "treasures of darkness" were the chapters of Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus" for all except a few more penetrative and courageous souls for many years! But what comes slowest often longest stays, while many a brilliant reputation fades as suddenly as it appears. How many hailed as new immortals have we seen depart into impenetrable obscurity? The work of literature or art which at once delivers all its meaning on our minds is by that sign condemned to an inferior rank. Very beautiful is the letter which Millet, of Barbizon, wrote to one for whom he had painted a picture which proved disappointing. "Wait," begged Millet, "until you have become acquainted with it, and then see how it impresses you. What I have been so long putting into it may then come out of it to your imagination and your heart. A picture that is really good for anything cannot at once establish right relations with the perceptive mind. Friendship with a picture, as with a person, is a thing of slowest growth." I quote the substance of his letter, not its form, which I cannot recall; but it has in it, I think, a doctrine of appreciation that applies to all the noble things of art. They have their treasures of darkness, their hidden riches in secret places, which they cannot yield at once, but only after those who fain would take them to themselves have proved themselves deserving of their worth.

"Till then their lovely eyes maintain
Their gay, unwavering, deep disdain."

Now, the same laws and principles hold good of our relations to all living personality. It is a favorite imagination with a great many people that what the darkness of our ignorance hides of human baseness is something horrible. No doubt it is. No doubt if all at once our house-fronts and

our store-fronts could be stripped off, our character-fronts also with their neat, superficial asblar of respectability, their florid ornaments of speech and protestation, there would be some startling revelations. Men of great business reputation, women who attract wide social admiration, must often wonder what the effect would be if others knew them as they know themselves. It would be very damaging no doubt; and yet, if *all* the store-fronts, house-fronts, life-fronts, could at once be stripped away, what an enhancement there would be of our appreciation of our fellow-men, what treasures of darkness would be discovered, what hidden riches in secret places, where we never thought that there was any treasure hid! For I believe that, where the darkness of our ignorance hides one grossness, baseness, or malignity, it hides a hundred brave fidelities and sacrifices and nobilities of word and deed. Evil is in its very nature noisier than good. Murder will out, and so will every less offence. The man with a muck-rake makes a daily heap of social dirt, and spreads it out over the morning or the evening paper, where it infects thousands of prurient imaginations; but no corresponding heap is made of the pure flowers and wholesome fruits of life, to sweeten our imagination and sustain our hearts. Yet these, compared to the foul growths of vice and crime, are ten to one. Yes, ten times ten. How much is hidden from us by the dulness of men's wits that is of the rarest moral excellence! They are not brilliant nor imaginative. "They have no speech and no language, and their voice is not heard," making a pleasant music in our ears. But there are those who know how good and true they are; or there is One who knows, whatever mortal blindness there may be. I do not believe that any stories have been written that exaggerate the sublimities of character as they declare themselves in people of the densest minds, the most incorrigible stupidity. When I asked Miss Wilkins where she got her village folk for her "*Humble Romance, and Other Stories*," she told me from her inner consciousness. But the New England woods are full of them; and

they plant beside all waters flowing from her rugged hills. A great many of them you and I have personally known. To the casual eye how dull, how uninteresting, they appear; but to the conquering Cyrus, laying bare the heaped up treasures of their secret places,—his army, it may be, only some pressing need of human sympathy,—what riches they disclose!—the same imperishable things that martyrs carried with them to their pyres, and which the flames could not destroy. And there is a darkness which is not of our ignorance, a blackness of wickedness that we know too well, which has its treasures for the eye of novelist and poet, to which is delegated for the time the penetration of the All-seeing Eye. Amid the wrecks of human character, like those of ships gone down at sea, there are sometimes more precious things than in the safest lives, which are like handsome ships in full career. One of our bright, young, literary fellows introduced us, not long ago, to his “disreputable friend, Mr. Raegen,” one of the lowest of his kind, yet capable of the greatest love, if it be true, as it is written, “Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends,”—for he was ready to do that, though his friend was only a poor, speechless babe, inconceivably dirty, it must be confessed, who put in him her perfect trust. Think you that such a story, or that hardly better one of the “Luck of Roaring Camp,” or any other of the kind, exaggerates the treasures hidden in the darkness of men’s ruined lives? I pray you rather think that they do not begin to tell of all the “things that remain,” and that “cannot be shaken,”—things of compassion and self-sacrifice which somehow are possible for men and women who have wandered far from the right way and whose feet have taken hold on hell. I talked with Warden Brush about his Sing-Sing prisoners; and he said: “They are the kindest people in the world.” That meant something better than the proverbial honor among thieves.

And what treasures of darkness there are, hidden away from us, and *for* us, in the lives of those to whom we are allied by closest ties of kinship and affection! “How little

of ourselves we know!" It is an ancient theme on which we have a modern variation:—

"Perhaps in us all there are heights of will,
And shadowy deeps of thought,
A land in the heart of each one's life
With self-surprises fraught."

They may be surprises of immoral will, of lawless passion; but, thank God, they may also be surprises of unspeakable nobility. "When I wrote that," Dr. Holmes said of his "Chambered Nautilus," "I did better than I could." The moral world is just as open as the intellectual to such unexpected good, has equally its "soul's east window of divine surprise." And, if it is so with ourselves, how much more evidently it is so with others, we are so much more ignorant of them than of ourselves! Shall we recognize each other in another world? The question presses upon many hearts. Meantime, how often do we fail to recognize each other here! There are men and women who have lived for years in fine old houses, starving, it may be, for common food, while gold and silver that would make them rich are hidden close at hand. And you think that this is tragical. But it is a screaming farce compared with the tragedy that is played over with some little variation every day,—the tragedy of men and women in all sorts of houses, old and new, who are starving all the time, each for the other's love; while, if they did but know it, there is enough of it hidden by some thinnest misconception or perversity to make them gloriously rich, and one right word would touch the secret spring and fling apart the doors that keep them from their own.

Once on a time I saw an Easter lily which had been given to one of my own people by a little child. It was a thing of human make, and yet I think no lily I had seen before of God's immediate making was so beautiful as that. And why? Because the little girl who made it had no sight nor hearing, no sense of smell or taste. She had only one sense, the sense of touch; but with that alone she had deftly made

the lily that conveyed the fragrance of her gratitude and love to one whom she had never seen,—could never see. She had *her* treasures of darkness, the skill that made and the affection that inspired her gift. She had that also by which her affection was inspired,—Miss Alcott's "Little Women," so printed (thanks to the dear lady whose divine compassion is always seeking out new avenues of help) that thousands of the blind can read it without eyes. Fragrant with infinite suggestion to my mind was that poor Easter lily, fragrant of the whole range of physical and spiritual development under the stress of limitation and defect. Peering down into its golden heart, I saw the treasures found in the darkness of their limitation and defect by tens of thousands of long-suffering, patient, and heroic men and women. I saw that there is no darkness which has not its treasures, no energy of disappointment, loss, and sorrow, yea, and sin, which cannot be converted into the energy of use and good. Shut out from the world, how many do we know shut in with God, and finding so their self-control, the use of their right hand, as never in their lives before, as many never do who seem more fortunate; that it may be fulfilled as it is written, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray"!

What treasures in the darkness of the lonely heart bereft of that dear presence which made life seem even better than the best!—a spiritual communion oftentimes more real than was its portion in the days of visible presence, an appreciation of the gift of God vouchsafed in the transfigured one it never had before, clear-shining memories coming out like stars to make the darkness beautiful, till all the inner heaven is irradiated with their silent peace; and, better than all this, something of noble consecration to the best and highest things, if haply so we may be worthier to rejoin our heavenly friends, and, being with them where they are, share in their knowledge of the wisdom and the love of God. Nor more are treasures hidden in the darkness of our sorrow than in the darkness of our sin,—a wise humility, a new compassion for all weak and wandering folk, a generous shame that

spurs us to a positive reality of righteousness more excellent than the unqualified simplicity of that early innocence which had only negative traits. Antæus gathered strength for the encounter every time he fell to earth; and there is many a fall of man from which the bruised and aching wrestler with temptation lifts himself up with firmer strength and more invincible resolve.

What treasures does that darkness hide which lies beyond the boundaries of our present life? Are they glad reunions with the loved ones who have been parted from our company? Are they high privileges of meeting with the mighty souls whom we have revered from afar? Are they great opportunities for going on in knowledge of the fair and perfect world? Are they the insight and the strength by which we shall be qualified to know what things are worth our hope and our desire, and to put every other underneath our feet? Alas! what answers can we give to questions such as these that are sufficient for our hearts? But, seeing that so much of darkness is the way to light and embosoms treasures of such priceless worth, shall we not trust that it will be even so, not otherwise, with that great darkness which en-spheres our mortal life?

Mysterious Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremb'le for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And, lo! Creation widened in man's view.

Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun! or who could find,
Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?

SCIENCE AND A FUTURE LIFE.

THE subject of my discourse this morning is in quotation-marks. The quotation is from Mr. Frederic Myers. It is the title of a book which has for its leading paper one with the same title, "Science and a Future Life." His book is well worth reading, as everything is that comes from his hand; for he is one of the past masters in the art of writing well, one of the first essayists of England, standing high up with Hutton and Morley and Pater, the substance of his thought being no whit inferior to the refinement and the beauty of his style. He was one of George Eliot's friends, and many a long talk they had together on the subject of the paper and the book whose common title I have made the title of my discourse this morning. I have done this for several reasons, and, first of all, because Mr. Myers is a Spiritualist, and that he is so is "significant of much," as Carlyle would say. Spiritualism, as the doctrine of a possible and actual intercommunication between departed spirits and their earthly friends, has won before now the suffrage of some men of science of the highest rank, notably in England that of Professor William Crookes, and still more notably that of Professor Alfred Russel Wallace, with Darwin, the contemporaneous discoverer of natural selection as the method by which vegetable and animal species are produced. The spiritualist enthusiast is glad and proud to count such names upon the roll of the defenders of his faith, and he is rightly so; but I am not sure but that he should be more glad and proud to count such a name as that of Frederic Myers. The æsthetic mind has been even less disposed to look favorably on Spiritualism than the scientific, so many of its associations have been unlovely, sordid, and

repellent. Moreover, the passion for discovery is very apt to lead the scientific mind astray. Who would not be one of the first to tell us where the skyey pathways meet and part? And you will notice that the scientific specialist is not infrequently as weak as water, once he oversteps the boundaries of his special field. Martineau, our great philosophic theologian, treads much more securely upon Huxley's ground than Huxley upon his, though Huxley is one of the greatest of his kind, and we can heartily agree with Mr. Myers when he says, "It has been fortunate for the intellectual interest of life that the peace-loving Darwin and the self-effacing Wallace, should have had a coadjutor more vividly touched with earthly fire, like the mortal charger who, champing more fiercely in the battle's fray, kept pace with the two undying steeds of Achilles." Literature has, on the whole, I am persuaded, a more sanative and equilibrating influence than science; and therefore—for I have not forgotten what I set out to say—I cannot but think the adhesion of such a mind as that of Frederic Myers to the spiritualist doctrine very important and significant, for it is one of the most radiant, clear, and balanced minds that illuminate our generation.

Before passing on to Mr. Myers's statement of the case, let me spend a moment on a matter of considerable importance,—the attitude of the intelligent and thoughtful persons towards the spiritualistic doctrine. This attitude is very commonly contemptuous; and it must be confessed that there has been much reason for its being so, both in the character of those who deal in spiritualistic wares, the managers of sittings and materializations, and in the credulity of those whom these so easily and so often capture in their snare. The amount of mediumistic trickery and fraud has been immense, though less, perhaps, than the more vigorous assailant of Spiritualism commonly believes; for I take it that one of the most definite results of our hypnotic and related studies is that the medium is often self-deceived. The credulity of the victim quite as much as the craft of the

adept has gone far to justify the contemptuous attitude of the intelligent and critical. We have all seen much of this,—seen how this credulity outruns the marvellous tale, levelling the mountains and filling up the valleys, making the way for it clear and smooth. And another circumstance that invites contemptuous indifference is the meagreness and pettiness of the details of spiritualist communications. Do we not all know men and women, earnest, affectionate, sincere, who have been drawn into the study of these things by some great sorrow and the hope of re-establishing communication with the beloved husband, wife, or child, who, however fully they may be persuaded of the general truth of spiritual communication, sorrowfully confess to us that after years of patient listening they have never had one word of characteristic tenderness or sweetness from the other side, while, very often, what purports to be the speech of friends, or of those once intellectual giants on the earth, is such monstrous drivel that we are reminded of Emerson's comment,—“If such things are valid messages, we must invent a more absolute suicide”? To this criticism and temper Mr. Myers answers, “To those who disdain the paltriness, the unspiritual character, of our results, and who would fain keep alive the religious glow in humanity with no definite basis of proof, I would reply that by small accretions some foothold may be upbuilt, and that he who stands on a narrow coral island in mist and night will in the end see more than he who floats dreamily amid the splendors of sunset that illumine an ever-shadowing sea.” And, notwithstanding the whole aggregation of circumstances that discourage the conscientious seeker and irritate and infuriate the sternly critical, we have at length, if not long since, come to a stage of the business at which a contemptuous attitude towards the doctrine as a whole, and all those who entertain it, is outrageous and absurd. When such men as Wallace and Myers give in their adhesion to the doctrine, to treat it with contempt is not the sign of a superior intelligence, but of intellectual narrowness and extreme stupidity.

It does not follow that a stampede of the community at large into the fields of psychical and spiritual research would be a good thing either for the research or for the motley throng. The investigation must be carried on by specialists, for whose work not one man in a thousand has the requisite qualifications. There are no experiments in anatomy or physiology or chemistry so nice and fine as those by which the psychologist must advance his knowledge of the interrelations of mind and mind, with or without the veil of death between their intercepting rays. And at this point you must allow to me a word of personal explanation; for this sermon is more of the nature of a talk with you about a very interesting matter than a set discourse, and I am trying to speak a word for all concerned. Just here it shall be a word for those who think, perhaps, that I have no business to be talking about this matter, seeing that I have made so little first-hand investigation; almost none at all. And I know that some of you have thought that I have been remiss in this, and in not following the example of my friend Savage, who has gone deep into the investigation, and come up, as it were, breathless with awe, and holding in his hand a pearl of great price. "Willing to justify myself," like the man in the New Testament, let me say for one thing that, if I have paid little attention to the matter on its experimental side, I have paid much attention to its literature, laying bare my understanding to the best that I could find.

Then, too, I have had friends whose experimental knowledge of the matter was extremely deep and wide, and they have put me in possession of their observations. My attempts at personal observation have been most unfortunate. This is one reason why I have not carried them further; but another, and much more important, is that a friend, deep versed in the phenomena, has for years been pledged to summon me when he had found something that he thought would be impressive or convincing to my mind. I have not been summoned yet: it may be because my friend has been distrustful of the phenomena which he has wit-

nessed, and it may be because he has waited and waited for something so absolutely convincing that it would not leave my doubt a leg to stand upon. But the main and all-important reason why I have not done more in the way of personal experiment is that I have had a profound distrust of my ability to bring a judicial mind to bear upon the alleged phenomena,—the phenomena, I should say, and leave out “alleged”; for they are that,—*appearances*, at the very least. It is not that I fear a too sceptical attitude,—rather one too expectant and imaginative, I always lend myself so readily to an illusion: the novel and the play are so entirely real to me; and at the séance, instead of being unfriendly, as the medium charged, as I sat sweltering in the impenetrable darkness for two mortal hours, I was only too anxious to have something happen,—I did not care particularly what. All my desires and hopes were enlisted on the side of some convincing revelation. Shall I say that the temper of my friends in this regard has also led me to distrust myself? Nowhere do I find Mr. Savage’s conclusions so imperfectly involved in his premises as in his discussions of these things; and, where he has one “affable, familiar ghost that nightly gulls him with intelligence,” I am sure that I should have a dozen or a score. To conclude this personal explanation, which has already been too long, let me say that, if I had had no immediate personal interest in the matter, no friends upon the other side, it might have been different. Something of Wordsworth’s reproach of the man who would “peep and botanize upon his mother’s grave,” seems to inhere in this form of curiosity. One doesn’t like to have so many go-betweens where all used to be so free and open,—every barrier down. He thinks that he would rather wait awhile,—’twill not be very long,—and then say to the beloved, if the best we hope is true,

“See, where my life broke off from thine,
How fresh the splinters keep and fine,
Only a touch and we combine.”

But, then, I know that there are those to whom the passionate desire to hear something from their own departed is the sole inspiration of their curiosity. If it is only one poor word, and they are sure of that, it closes up the else impassable gulf, and makes earth and heaven kiss.

In this connection, a word may very well come in about the temper of the investigating mind. We are frequently assured that a certain generous expectancy is essential to success. But to assume this attitude is to abandon that of science. The scientific temper is that which fears above all things that it may be given over to believe a lie; and, until Spiritualism can address itself cheerfully and by preference to this temper, it does not stand on scientific ground.

Most people, when they speak of Science and the Future Life, do so without any reference to the Spiritualist's investigations. These are not considered scientific. But, surely, they are nothing, if not scientific. The observations and experiments may not be always carried on in the spirit of the most rigid scientific observation and experiment. The inductions from the facts, the deductions from the principles, may not be in the temper of a Darwin or a Huxley. But a great many scientific inductions and deductions are not that. How justly and appropriately Darwin might have chosen for the motto of his work the words of Bacon! "If in anything I have been too credulous or too little awake and attentive, or if I have fallen off by the way and left the inquiry incomplete, nevertheless, I so present these things naked and open that my errors can be marked and set aside before the mass of knowledge be further infected by them; and it will be easy for others to continue and carry on my labors." Every scientific investigator and expounder would do well to keep those words in mind, and measure himself by their standard on all critical occasions. But all science does not attain to this; and, even when it does, it does not necessarily attain the truth. The course of science in history is strewn all the way with the corpses of theories and hypotheses that were once full of lusty life. They were no less

scientific because in the struggle for existence they were not able to survive. Science is not a new infallibility, as too many seem to think : it is simply a method of procedure. Either its premises may be invalid or its conclusions from them may not be fairly drawn. That does not make it any less scientific. So, then, whatever the defects of spiritualistic reasoning here and there, its method is a scientific method. What it aims at is a scientific demonstration of a future life. There are many thinkers of first-rate ability who think it has attained to this. Mr. Frederic Myers, to whom I now come back, is one of these.

He begins by saying that the chief spokesmen of science, as a general thing, answer "Nothing at all" to the question, "What has science to say about a future life?" At the same time the general influence of science is not merely neutral. It is an influence against belief in man's survival when this life is over. It is so because such is the temper of our time that, "what Science does not tend to prove, she in some sort tends to disprove; beliefs die out without formal refutation, if they find no place among the copious stores of verified and systematized facts and inferences which are supplanting the traditions and speculations of pre-scientific days as the main mental pabulum of mankind." But, while science as embodied in its noblest representatives, or in the noisy crowd of their retainers, is not generally afflicted with a habit of self-depreciation, it is far too modest in its general abandonment of immortality as a subject about which it knows and can know nothing. It is far too much the habit of the scientific mind to forget that we are "in the morning of the times," and to regard our present attainments in science as pretty near the end of all there is to know. I see no reason why the investigations of science should not be carried as far beyond our present standpoint as this is beyond the first beginnings of scientific apprehension. I see not why they should not yet outstrip our present knowledge ten, twenty, and a hundred times. But can they do that, and, while pushing back the frontiers

of ignorance to the utmost confines of the present life and the present world, not push them beyond these confines? I think not. Soon or late science will cease from its neutrality as to a future life. It will deny or it will affirm the reality of a future life. It will do one or the other with such facts and reasons as will leave as little room for doubt as we have now about the attraction of gravitation or the movement of the earth around the sun. Now, it is Mr. Myers's firm conviction that it has really made a good beginning, and gone a good way in the direction of an affirmative answer to the question of the Book of Job: "If a man die, shall he live again?"

The supernaturalist disdains the aid of science to his faith, but his appeal has always been to scientific reasons for the faith that he has in him. It has been to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Now, this has always been a scientific argument,—walking by sight, by somebody's sight, and not by faith. When the fact was believed because it was revealed in the New Testament, there had to be some reason for believing the report of the New Testament. But latterly the scientific character of the argument has been more apparent. All the New Testament witnesses have been called, and examined and cross-examined. Their evidence has entirely broken down. Here the attempt for a scientific basis for the belief in a future life has been a complete failure. It would have been one if all the facts had been sustained. For it is the supernaturalist's position that Jesus did not rise from the dead *as a man*, but as God, or the Son of God, or some supernatural being. Now, what *man* has done, man *may* do. But it does not follow that he can do what a god has done, or demi-god.* So, if the New Testament facts were impregnable, there would be no scientific proof of immortality in them. But they are anything but impregnable. Examine them closely, and they vanish into thin air. Moreover, if Jesus were a man, pure and simple, his miraculous resurrection would not prove a general immortality, any more than the miracle of Cana would

convert all water into wine. The advance of science may yet throw some suggestive light on the reported resurrection of Jesus, but so far the verdict on the report is, "Not proven"; and what is not proven cannot of course be made the scientific basis of a belief in the universal immortality of man.

But while this scientific argument for immortality, always vitiated by unscientific elements of supernatural assumption, has steadily been getting into worse and worse repute, and while, apart from Spiritualism, the weakening confidence in a future life has been one of the most conspicuous aspects of the last thirty years, very noiselessly and quietly there has been going on a development of science that has important bearings on the question of a future life. I remember very well that our friend R. H. Manning, one of the most thoughtful men of our assembly, and one of the best instructed, grew at length into the feeling that science had at last revealed a world so wonderful that the wonderfulness of immortality boded it no ill. "Is there not," he wrote, "a dim possibility that scientific progress in scientific methods may yet afford a better ground for assurance than we have had? What is there to forbid, in the more or less distant future, the development of finer and finer faculties, and through them the discovery of more subtle media of communication, till at length we shall be able to hold conscious intercourse with intelligences now beyond the possibility of our cognition?" To which Mr. Myers would make answer, "The hour cometh, *and now is*, for such a consummation." "The whole history of science," he reminds us, "is a history of the recognition and interpretation of continually slighter indications of forces or entities continually more subtle or remote." But of late the movement on this line of progress has received a great acceleration. In 1865 John Stuart Mill, discussing whether or not there are "unconscious mental modifications," wrote that the difference between the two opinions, favorable and adverse to their existence, was "beyond the reach of experiment." The

suddenness with which this statement was discredited was hardly less than that when Doctor Lardner wrote convincingly that ocean steam-navigation was impossible, and published his pamphlet just in time for the first ocean steamer crossing the Atlantic to bring it to our shores. Long since the fact of unconscious mental modifications, unconscious cerebration, was established by hundreds of experiments. "We are now learning to conceive of our normal consciousness as representing only a fragment of the activity going on in our brains." At the same time we are learning at the feet of many competent psychologists that our unconscious selves have media and methods of communication which enable them without sensory contacts to transmit images and ideas and thoughts through intervening space.

It has been too readily assumed by Spiritualists generally that these conclusions all furnish grist for their mill, confirmation for their thought. The truth would seem to be that the Spiritualist's easy and confident inference of spiritual agency has been wholly a matter of the old psychology; and, if the new has something to confirm his confidence, it has a good deal at the same time to lessen it. Thus, for one thing, it disposes absolutely of the assurance we have heard so often that the consulting person was not thinking of what the medium tells him, whence it is argued that the medium cannot have got his knowledge from any suggestion of the consulting person. But says the new psychology: "How do you know what you are thinking of? A man's conscious thinking is the least part of his thinking." Then, too, the old psychology, on which Spiritualism was brought up, assumed that men's conscious thinking could not be transferred without sensory contact of some sort. Hence they eliminated the consulting person, and, where the medium knew things beyond his natural ken, were confident of something wafted from the other shore. But the new psychology is confident of thought-transference here and now between living beings, and that the transference may be, and, perhaps, oftenest is, that of unconscious thought.

You will see, at once, that the abatement of men's confidence in the other-worldliness of their communications must be immense on this account. The medium's suggestion may be from the unconscious thought of the consulting person, or it may be from the conscious or unconscious thought of some other person on this shoal of time. All this is wonderful enough,—not a whit less wonderful than spiritual intercommunication in the ordinary sense; but every one with any disposition to see things as they are must see that it remands thousands of inter-mundane spiritualist communications—those thought to be such—to the realm of possible actions and reactions between minds still grossly hemmed in by this muddy vesture of decay.

Now, however it may be with the more rash and thoughtless, there are many Spiritualists who perceive clearly enough that “the Danaans bringing gifts,” the new psychologists bringing their manifold experiments and observations confirmatory of the vast and wonderful range of men's unconscious personality, have also brought explosives which have sent a good deal of the former confidence in extra-mundane influences and voices higher than the moon. But there are those who, nevertheless, believe that what remains is much more than what is lost; that the new psychology, while destroying much, has built much more together,—not enough to make the pile complete, but enough to lay for it foundations that cannot be shaken. Mr. Myers, with whom I have again caught up, is one of these. In all the varieties of automatic action he finds the sources of the messages reduced to three. “First of all comes the medium's own mind. From that,” he says, “the vast bulk of the messages are undoubtedly drawn, even when they refer to matters which the automatist [as he calls the medium] once knew, but has entirely forgotten. Whatever has gone into the mind may come out of the mind, although this automatism may be the only way of getting at it. Secondly, there is a small percentage of messages apparently telepathic,—containing, that is to say, facts probably unknown to the automatist, but

known to some living person in his company, or connected with him. But, thirdly, there is a still smaller residuum of messages which," he says, "I cannot thus explain,—messages which contain facts apparently not known to the automatist, nor to any living friend of his, but known to some deceased person, perhaps a total stranger to the living man whose hand is writing. I cannot avoid," he says, "the conviction that in some way—however dreamlike and indirect—it is the departed personality which originates such messages as these." Such a conclusion, expressed so modestly, and with such large allowance for the range of self and mutual deception, is certainly not hard and fast enough for the more dogmatic. But, as the conclusion of one who has done his best to see things as they are, and who has evidently brought to his studies and investigations a singularly clear and honest mind, it commends itself to the respectful attention and consideration of all those who are equal to what Bacon calls "the true and legitimate humiliation of the human spirit"; *i.e.*, the patient subjection of our minds to the stress of all the facts, however humble or unwelcome, that have a bearing on the matter that we have in hand.

A scientific hypothesis, to be thoroughly established, must not only account for the facts in hand, but it must be impossible to account for them in any other way. Mr. Myers is convinced that the facts on which he builds his confidence in the suggestions of the living dead cannot be accounted for in any other way. But there are those—this I am bound to say in all sincerity—who think the new psychology is still too young to give a final answer to a question that involves so much. Within the last few weeks I have read a very interesting book, "The Law of Psychic Phenomena," by a Mr. Thomas J. Hudson: but he, while cordially allowing everything in the way of spiritual phenomena on which Mr. Myers builds his confidence, contends that the influence and suggestion of the people who still live after the manner of this present life are ample to account for all those things from which Mr. Myers and others draw

a different conclusion. Differences of temperament and circumstance will in most cases be decisive as to which opinion the individual will adopt. Those who have all their friends about them in security will be less apt to go with Mr. Myers or some more positive believer than those whose hearts are singing day and night,—

“And oh for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!”

However rich and full may be the contribution of these studies to our confidence in the immortal life, I do not myself believe that they are all that science has to give. In its doctrine of the persistency of force I find an intimation of the survival of the conscious spirit, for in no mundane fortunes of the body or the mind of the most noble dead do I find anything adequate to the force they “made their own being here.” I find another intimation of continuance in the correlation of growth. I find the hope of personal continuance correlated with all that is best in human character. I do not forget that there are individuals who would much prefer annihilation, as the sharp sword to cut a knot which they are hopeless to untie, and that they would snatch the boon at once if they were only sure of it. I do not forget that whole races have dreamed passionately of Nirvana as the highest good. But that was because life was intolerable here. Given life normal, sweet, and sane, and the desire for immortality is correlated with everything most generous in our thought, most pure in our affections, most steadfast in our moral will; and, if this correlation does not suggest and prove the justness of our hope, then is there in human nature a radical contradiction, making at least one exception to the saying of old time, “It is impossible for God to lie.” Consider, too, that the scientific teaching of the world’s final wreck, so cheerfully expounded by Professor Huxley and others of his kind, creates a new necessity for immortality, if God is wise and good. The Positivist has done much to

make the vision of society shaped to perfection on the earth a noble substitute for the vision of immortal things. But, if such a society, like a child's bubble blown in air, only grows more beautiful, to vanish into nothingness at last, then, if the eternal housekeeping be not utterly unthrift, there must be an immortality of souls to husband in perpetual security the gains of human struggle, sorrow, patience, hope, and love.

Robert Browning has made question in one of his most subtle poems whether the element of uncertainty which inheres in our belief in God and immortality is not necessary to the purest, most religious character of our belief. But for this uncertainty, he seems to say, we cannot precipitate ourselves by an act of faith upon our noblest hope. "We are saved by hope," said the apostle; "but hope which is seen is not hope." Once certain, and there is no opportunity for that act of faith which has in it the essence of religion. Be these things as they may, we cannot be too glad that, while the wheels of science tarry on their way, bringing victorious home the confidence that has won its laurels in the open field, the hope of immortality as a religious hope, strengthened by every intellectual aspiration, purified by every true affection, glorified by every manly struggle with besetting sin, still holds its high imperial seat, and rules our spirits with a godlike and benignant sway. We may not regret the march of science. We may not hug any darkness or attempt to smother any beam of light. But, if the coming reign of scientific certainty is to deprive men of the divine exhilaration of abandoning themselves wholly to some hope which is not yet entirely seen, then we may well be glad that we are living now, and not in any more assured but less heroic time to come.

THE HETERODOX HELL.

My subject is 'The Heterodox Hell ; in other words, The Ethical Sternness of our Unitarian faith. "The Strict System and the Easy" were the terms in which the orthodox of half a century ago were agreed to set forth their system as against that of the protesting Unitarians. Theirs was the strict, the Unitarian was the easy, system. Was the distinction well made? Is the moral system of Unitarianism and of every form of reasonable faith an easy system? Does it leave morality without the sanctions necessary for its support? Does it make evil-doing a little matter in comparison with the sin of the traditional theology, the punishment of evil-doing so small a matter that it can have no appealing force for the imagination, no terrors for the weak and erring will?

I think we should do well to heed a challenge that is flung so often in our teeth. Woe to the preacher and the congregation of whom it can be truly said, "Behold, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one who hath a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument"! And the charges brought against us have not been absolutely groundless or unjust. No matter for the relative aspect of the case — the possible retort that sin can be no such dreadful matter if a moment of repentance and the precipitation of one's self upon the merits of the atoning blood of Jesus can blot the record out. The fact remains that in our liberal churches the doctrines of the love of God and the divine forgiveness have often tended to obscure the laws of moral retribution. "God likes to forgive little boys: that's what he's for," a budding Universalist is reported to have said in justification of his latest peccadillo. There is as much liberal theology

of a certain sort compressed in that as of charcoal in a diamond. "We must preach the doctrine of hatred," says Emerson, "when love pules and whines." No, not of hatred, but of "the terrible things in righteousness," the sternness of the moral law,—a sternness which is not the negation, but the expression, of Almighty Love.

In choosing a title for this sermon, one of the first I hit upon was "A Holy Fear"; and I am not yet sure that I did well in changing it to another. Holy means healthy; and that there is a healthy fear inherent in any just perception of a man's relations to the moral law there cannot, I think, be any slightest doubt. Perfect love casteth out fear, no doubt, but love is very far from being perfect in a very great majority of human hearts; and, while this condition lasts, a wholesome fear is a desideratum not to be despised. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of goodness," says the Old Testament. "The beginning of wisdom," it is commonly rendered; but wisdom here, as in many other places, has the force of goodness. This doctrine of the genesis of goodness is not one that any well-instructed evolutionist would accept. Darwin found the beginning of goodness in the gregarious tendency of animal races, and Spencer finds it in the tendency of certain actions to produce pleasure and of others to produce pain. So far as fear had anything to do with the beginning of goodness, it was the fear of man, and not the fear of God. So much for the historical aspect; and for the individual the beginning of goodness is not the fear of "our Father who is in heaven," but the father or the mother who is on earth. Fear of their punishment, of their displeasure, of their blame, of their disappointment, of their grief,—these are the beginning of goodness for the growing child. They are not only the beginning: they are a continual moral brace and spur. Many a grown man and woman is kept from shameful courses by the thought of the old folks at home, the fear of doing anything that would bring down their venerable heads in sorrow to the grave. But the wholesome fear which encourages men to difficult

duty, and shames them out of meanness, and keeps them from excess, is made up of many parts. The fear of statutory penalties, wholesome enough in many instances, is but the smallest part of it. Another is the fear of social disesteem, of the clear-eyed rebuke of noble friends, of the rebuke their character and their ideals would minister if they did not, could not, speak one word; if they were wholly ignorant of the committed fault. Another part of it is the fear of what a brutish vice may brand upon the physical organism; another, of that entanglement in which every secret act of wickedness involves the doer soon or late, the little ever steadily compelling greater sin. Again, what fear more wholesome than the fear of being what we hate, of missing those beatitudes which have been promised to us by our most serious and consecrated hours? There is no need to go beyond the present life for a fear so noble and constraining that it would seem impossible for any soul on which it had fairly delivered itself to choose the evil way. But it is an absurd idea, a ridiculous assumption, that, because "we still have judgment here," a future life can have for us no fear. Fear enough the fear of entering on another life conscious that we have miserably squandered this, the fear of an accusing memory dimming the lustre of the bright immortal years, the fear of meeting those whose noble expectation we have not fulfilled, the fear of being known at length for what we inly are. The preacher of the new religion who does not seek to bring to bear upon his people's minds these "terrors of the Lord" is doing his prophetic duty in a miserably imperfect way.

I shall enter into no comparison of this heterodox hell with the hell of the traditional religion. I do not care to prove that it is every whit as terrible as that. For that, whatever it may signify when the process of disintegration which is at present going on has come full circle, has meant for centuries in its habitual presentation that a man for not believing what he could not believe without intellectual suicide would be thrust into an eternal fiery hell,—a punish-

ment that would make the God inflicting it more reprobate and more deserving of such pangs than any human being, though we should imagine one uniting in himself the crimes of all the Cæsars and the Borgias, the Hapsburgs and the Bourbons, the Sultans and the Tsars. The easiest system would be preferable to such strictness as that which Jonathan Edwards taught with sad-eyed, broken-hearted earnestness a century and a half ago. I do not even care to show that the reality which is now connoted by the symbol of eternal hell is not a sterner construction of the ways of God with men than that of rational religion. Of this, however, I am sure: that it is not a construction that begins to make "the sinfulness of sin" so evident and so deterrent. It threatens the evil-doer with an eternity beyond the grave in which he has no power of self-recovery, in which not God himself could, if he would, break up the torpor of his soul, or allay the fierceness of its never-ending pains of bitter accusation and of vain regret.

"My own hope is a sun will pierce
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched;
That after last returns the first,
Though a wide compass round be fetched;
That what began best can't end worst,
Nor what God blest once prove accurst."

Meantime, "we still have judgment here"; and Macbeth spoke for universal man when he declared that, if his crime might have its be-all and its end-all here upon this bank and shoal of time, he'd jump the life to come. If Macbeth could say this, with all his superstitious certainty of a material hell, with all his spiritual incompetency for measuring the scope of punishment upon this hither side of death, how much more can they for whom the fires of hell are only glowing metaphors of spiritual pain! As "a hangman's whip to hold the wretch in order," the fear of hell has never been a potent instrument. It will not be more potent now that its flaming terrors have all been translated into the terms of conscience

and the inner life. If "the judgment of this world" could be brought home to sinful men without any least exaggeration, but with the unfaltering simplicity of scientific truth, it would breed in them a holy fear more potent to pluck back their feet from paths of vice and crime than any vision of the penal fires that flamed up in the old theology, or any dim reflection of them in the glassy current of the progressive and evasive orthodoxy of the present time.

The circles of the "judgment here" are quite as numerous and deepen down as formidably and fearfully as those which Dante threaded round and down, till in the lowest deep he found Satan, half-apparent, jammed like a ragged stopper into the bottom of the pit. There is first the hell of physical misery and degradation and defect. This is the hell of saints who have not kept the body's sacred law; of restless women who can never find enough to do or to be done; of the victims of society, so called—the round of frivolous excitements from which come prostration and collapse; of men who run the race for wealth till something breaks, and henceforth they are mere physical and mental wrecks along the road where others are in full career. This is the hell of drunkards, of debauchees,—a hell fierce flaming in their faces, burning away their physical nobility with its intolerable rage. It is much wider in its scope than we are wont to think. As the violet of the spectrum shades into colors that we might see if we had better eyes, so, if we did but know it, there is many a physical penalty that we do not note as such, that with our dull eyes we do not perceive at all, but which, if we were more observant or if we had better eyes, we might see plainly enough. We read of Jesus in the New Testament that, as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered. The story carries with it the suggestion of a universal law. Every man's face is being daily, hourly, altered by his prayers, by the desires which he allows himself, by the dominant passions of his life. There is many a face that is now hateful and repellent which might have been beautiful and attractive but for some secret

shame, some fatal tendency of thought or will, some adultery of the heart. It is not the sensual vices only that insure these penalties. Greed and vanity and pride all twitch the mask aside, and show the actual man. And such is the unity of soul and body that it may well be doubted whether there can be any moral aberration which does not register itself upon the physical man,—not on his face alone, but on his total life. “I am all face,” said the naked beggar to Montaigne,—his whole body equally toughened to the weather. So is the universal human body equally plastic to the stress of good and evil thoughts, of high and low ideals. If we could have a perfect chemistry, I doubt not that it would detect in each man’s bodily tissues an “abstract and brief chronicle” of all the vices of his past life, of all the ignoble passions to which in the sphere of the imagination he has allowed full swing, though he has not dared to put them into the concrete of action.

But the hell of physical deterioration, ruin, and defect is not the only hell of those whose faults are on the sensual side; and there are faults much deadlier than these which make no appreciable registry upon the physical man. No one can study the New Testament without seeing that, as between the brutal and the fiendish sins,—the sins of sensual passions and the sins of selfish and malicious calculation,—Jesus was kindly and sympathetic with the former every time. They were much less heinous than the latter, in his eyes. But the moral standards of Christendom have in general reversed this order. For the Roman Catholic impurity has been almost the only vice, and in Protestant societies for the woman overtaken in a sexual fault there is no “place for repentance.” I leave you to determine whether Jesus was mistaken in the distinction that he made. Your decision against him would be immediate if the measure of a fault were to be found in the amount of physical penalty that it entails. For it is evident that our calculating and malicious faults entail no such obvious physical penalties as our faults of sensual passion. Are they, then, less severely punished?

Nay ; for the hell of physical deterioration is but one hell of many in the range of natural penalty for vice and crime. Even for the sensual fault the physical penalty is but the smallest part. Another is the public shame, though there has been no formal, public arraignment, the consciousness of pitying or averted eyes, the visible grief and shame of nearest friends, the dread of sinking to some lower deep, the haunting memory of days once pure and sweet, the sense of banishment from the society of the purest and the best, whom still the weak and erring often reverence in their inmost hearts. Then, too, there is for almost every sensual fault a hell of correlated shame and sin. The secret fault escapes a hundred social penalties that wait on the discovered vice or crime, only to plunge into a vortex of temptations to new forms of guilt, through which the hardiest mariner may not hope to safely steer his way. You will at once recall the saying of George Eliot : "Under every guilty secret there is hidden a brood of guilty wishes whose unwholesome, infecting life is cherished by the darkness. The contaminating effect of deeds often lies less in the commission than in the consequent adjustment of our desires,— the enlistment of our self-interest on the side of falsity." Well may we pray, as did the Psalmist, to be saved from secret faults : they are such mothers of lies, of insincerity, of dishonesty, of faithlessness. They are

" the rift within the lover's lute
Which by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening slowly silence all."

Can you not conceive of faults which, in their first inception, have but little power to curse and kill, but which, to preserve their secret, have so walled themselves about with various obstruction that no good influence can penetrate to them, and the man cannot break through into the freedom of a sincere and simple life ? It is a tragedy which repeats itself as regularly as the rising of the sun. Happy are they who are quite sure that it has never touched their lives with even a passing shadow !

It is conceivable that the inveterate sinner may be so hardened in his fault, may be so deaf to the rebuke of conscience through prolonged neglect of her persuasive voice, that nothing shall disturb him in the base enjoyment of his evil way. Is this escape from punishment, or is it the worst possible punishment that can come upon a man,—to be dead in trespasses and sins? But this is slow to come; and till it comes, through infinite degrees of moral lapse, what accusation and what punishment there is prepared for every sinful heart! I see not what necessity there is for “future punishment,” as if within the limits of this present life the resources of Omnipotence were not sufficient for the reward of every man according to his works. The punishment is oftentimes so great, so terrible, that it would seem to be out of all proportion with the offence committed, did we not know that by such punishment the erring heart is made to see “how awful goodness is, and virtue in her shape how lovely,—see and feel its loss.” Once let a man depart from the right way, and there seems to be some terrible fatality through which at every turn he is reminded of his fault. Things that are blessedness to other men are grief and pain to him. The air so pure, the sky without a cloud, the spring so fresh and sweet, the earth’s warm coverlet of snow so white and pure, are images of lost beatitudes. Will he seek forgetfulness in the pages of some pleasant book? Suddenly he sees himself as in a mirror,—his meanness or his cruelty, his selfishness or his dishonesty, his faithlessness to sacred trusts of business or of home, depicted there so vividly that it seems as if the author must have intended every word for him. If not directly, then by contrast he is reminded of his secret shame.

“The play’s the thing
In which I’ll catch the conscience of the king,”

the Prince of Denmark says. A capital device! How many consciences have been caught in such a net from first to last! more, I have sometimes thought, than in the meshes

of the preacher's homily ; so many that I find it hard to understand the accusation of the drama as immoral, thinking that, if evil men would not be stricken to the heart by what passes on the stage, they had better stay at home. Then, too, what accusation and what punishment for erring men there is in the high trust and noble expectation of their friends, and in the memory of past experience that was full of stainless joy ! If ever for a little while there is a respite from these visions and these voices, there is sure to come along some happy Pippa, singing her untimely song, her unconscious comment on the moral situation. At other times from out the silent dark the faces of the friends whom we have loved and lost shape themselves, grieved and sad, as if they looked into our very hearts and saw what harbors there of unrepented fault and vain desire. Yea, for each one of us who has not kept the law of righteousness, till we are hardened in our sin all things have eyes to see, "as if they were God's spies," all things have voices to impeach, and hands to smite and slay.

Rossetti asks, "What is the sorriest thing that enters hell?" and makes reply, "Not any of the sins, but this and that fair deed which a soul's sin at length can supersede." That is to say, the real goodness of a man, which may, in one part of his life and action, for a long time coexist with evil in some other part, at length gives way. It is the case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Soon or late one must invade the province of the other. There must be war, and to the knife. There cannot be an everlasting dualism of the moral life. No man can serve two masters. Eventually he must cleave to the one, and despise the other. And what a fearful hell is that of real goodness broken down and utterly despoiled ! If there is one more fearful, it is that which is constituted for us by the reactionary influence of a persistent fault upon the memory of the good that we have done. To think that even our most loving offices of friendship and affection have come to be remembered only with stinging shame, since we have fallen away from truth and righteous-

ness! Thank Heaven it is not so with all! that there are those who graciously remember every noble, generous deed done for them by men and women who have been overmastered by temptation and fallen into evil ways! But with the most an evil present spoils the noblest past, making it seem an unreality and sham, which very likely it was not; while for the evil-doer his hell of blasted recollection has no sharper pang than that the noble and the good whom he has served with offices of the purest possible affection will wish perhaps that they could blot out his memory and the memory of such offices forever.

In my divinity school days I read in Plutarch's crabbed Greek an essay on "The Delay of the Deity in Punishing the Wicked." But is there really much delay? There is of certain outward penalties. The sensual indulgence does not work its obvious ruin all at once. The penalties of social disesteem, of friendship growing cold, of honor changing to contempt, of ruined fortunes and domestic altars broken down,—all these may be delayed; but, if they were delayed forever, the vindication of the moral law would still be a hard and terrible reality. There would still remain the hells of shameful character and of dreadful loss. "Be sure your sin will find you out," though you should go unwhipped of justice till the end, or scourged with praises which but mock the voices of your heart. "They that are in sin," said Swedenborg, "are in the punishment of sin." That was a real vision of "Things seen in Hell": *they that are in sin are in the punishment of sin.* And to be in sin were punishment enough if there were no other. It is punishment enough to be a brute, when one might be a man; to be a coward, when one might be a hero; to be a hindrance to all social good, when one might be a help; to destroy men's faith in human nature and in God, when one might strengthen it; to be a petty, groveling creature, when one might stand with port erect and face towards heaven, without hate or fear.

In the last analysis the most dreadful punishment is not anything that may come upon us from without, any social

penalty; nor is it anything that may arise in our own minds of miserable regret, of shapeless fear, of imagined voices — “Thou art become as one of us,” from the bad in literature and life; “Depart from us: we never knew you,” from the good and true. The most dreadful punishment is to fall immeasurably short of the mark of our high calling; to be so little, when we might be so much. In Shakspeare’s plays, how little does the tragic end of Macbeth or Iago, Regan or Goneril, add to our sense of their great misery! To be a Macbeth or an Iago, a Regan or a Goneril, that is more terrible than any outward ruin or any consciousness of an impassable gulf between ourselves and those in whose approval we could see the smile of God.

“I sent my soul through the invisible,
Some letter of the after-life to spell;
And by and by my soul returned to me,
And answered, “I myself am heaven — and hell.”

Hell unmistakably for the unrighteous man, however clear of outward suffering for his sin, however dead to inward pleading and expostulation,—most unmistakably when most dead to these; but heaven with equal certainty for those who, if they must say, “I am poor and despised,” can add, “Yet have I kept thy precepts.” It would be a very dark and gloomy picture that I have presented to your minds and to your consciences and hearts, were it not that it involves an opposite as full of brightness and of cheer. For there is no misery of wickedness and no painfulness of accusation or of punishment for the erring soul which has not a corresponding excellence and satisfaction and beatitude for the soul unswervingly devoted to the law of righteousness. But I can easily conceive that the terms of my discourse suggest in various particulars a situation foreign to your experience. You have your faults, but they are not so dark and tragical as those which I have seemed to have in mind. Yet for such as you have there is the same eternal law. You are less because of them than what you ought to be. They rob

you of your peace. They turn your pleasures into grief and shame. The friendship and the love that are given you so lavishly,—you must often ask yourselves if you are worthy of such costly gifts. Are they really given to *you* or to some imaginary person? And, if to some imaginary person, must you not strive to grow into that image, so that the friendship and the love you prize so much may really be for you an indefeasible possession, so that you may rightfully account yourself one of that blessed family in earth and heaven who, though poor and despised, have kept the eternal law?

Such, then, is the ethical sternness of our Unitarian faith. Such is the heterodox hell. That it can match the terrors of the old theology I have not desired to show. But that we have not here any “easy system” is, surely, plain enough; and that we have here a system which, although the half has not been told, makes the intrinsic hideousness of sin sufficiently apparent, is as plain. What man is there, however clean his conscience, who can look upon these laws and retributions without holy fear? What can they mean if not that the Eternal loveth righteousness, and that he has made the way of the transgressor so immeasurably hard in order that, should “goodness draw us not, then weariness may toss us to his breast”?

THE RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION

To speak more exactly, The Religious Revolution which is now going on, and what it means or ought to mean for people of intelligence and social spirit. There is, I take it, a religious revolution going on, and one of first-rate importance. I know that all will not agree to this. But there are always those who cannot discern the signs of the times. Did not Alexander Stephens write in 1859: "There is not a ripple upon the surface. The country was never in a profounder quiet"? Why, certainly, as Mr. Curtis said, "Upon Missionary Ridge, upon Lookout Mountain, upon the heights of Dalton, upon the spires of Atlanta, silence and solitude, the peace of the Southern Policy of Slavery and Death." "But look! hark!" he added: "through the great five years before you a light is shining, a sound is ringing. It is the gleam of Sherman's bayonets; it is the roar of Grant's guns; it is the red daybreak and wild morning music of peace indeed,—the peace of national life and liberty." History abounds in such surprises, in men who cry, Peace! peace! when the war has actually begun. It is easy in these times for those who are resolved or anxious to deceive themselves to do so. A religious revolution! What nonsense, when so many fine new churches are being built,—not always paid for, it is true, nor always meant to be; but that is a matter of "mere morality," with which religion, strictly speaking, Mr. Moody tells us, hasn't anything to do. And then look at the missionary contributions, and see how generous they are; and right here in Brooklyn behold a revival of religion going on, whose abettors, like the Bourbons, have learned nothing and forgotten nothing, who, science and the critics notwithstanding, are going, they assure us, to hold fast their belief that

Moses wrote the Pentateuch, and that the world was made and finished in six ordinary days. Did I say, It is easy in these times for those who are resolved or anxious to deceive themselves to do so? It is easy for those who are neither resolved nor anxious to do so, so reassuring is the aspect of the general administration of religion, so peaceful, so orderly, embracing so many in its maternal arms, soothing and comforting so many on its maternal breast. And, truly, the man is foolish who expects anything in the nature of a sudden collapse of ecclesiastical and dogmatic Christianity in Europe and our western continent. Ecclesiastical and theological systems, as well as religions, die hard. For the popular imagination Christianity was a *fiat* religion at the start, and had a *fiat* victory. It said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. Even those who think they know better, date the complete triumph of the new religion from 325 A.D., when Constantine threw his sword into the Council of Nicæa, and it landed in the Athanasian scale. But, in truth, not until 529 A.D. did the last pagan temple disappear in Italy; and — a strange coincidence, if nothing more — in that same year the last school of Greek philosophy was closed by an imperial mandate. Long after that the brightness of the sunken luminary lingered in the sky, and touched with beauty many a cloudy dome and pinnacle of thought and fancy. The signal proof of this is Dante, born in 1265 and dying in 1321. For the Paganism of Dante, conspicuous in the philosophy, abundant in the picturesque details of his great epic, is a Paganism *left over from the past*. And yet Petrarch, the first great leader of the pagan Renaissance, was seventeen years old when Dante died. The morning star was up before the evening star had left the sky. And this conjunction has led the unwary here and there to speak of Dante as an early leader of the Renaissance. But no: his Paganism was the residuum that had withstood the force of twelve long centuries of Christian time.

Bearing these things in mind, to expect anything in the nature of a sudden collapse of ecclesiastical and dogmatic

Christianity is evidently miscalculating and absurd. It will endure for centuries to come ; and between it and the rising faith, however named, there will be a transfusion of blood, just as there was between Paganism and Christianity,—something of the new passing over into the old, much of the old passing over into the new. And for a long time there will be the same kind of difference that produced the names “pagan” and “heathen” for those not accepting Christianity. A pagan was a countryman, a villager ; a heathen, a heathman, a dweller on the heath. And these names got to be used to indicate those who did not accept Christianity, because the villagers and countrymen were much slower to accept the Christian doctrine than those living in the cities, which were the centres of culture and intelligence. Things are not altogether now as they were then. Thanks to steam and electricity and the newspaper, there is much more intercommunication than there was when Christianity was young, the solidarity of States is much more coherent, the movement of thought is much more general and at a much quicker pace. Nevertheless, we have already come to a condition that is not altogether dissimilar to that of pagan Rome, when the traditional religion was rejected by all the intelligent, believed by all the ignorant, and useful to all the magistrates. Already a great gulf has opened between the intelligent and the ignorant of the community. It would not be wider if those on one side were still cherishing the Ptolemaic astronomy, while those on the other side accepted the Copernican. Nothing could be more persuasive of the incommunicableness of ideas than the kind of talk reported to us from the revival meetings in our city, and the current preaching of the period, over against results of scientific criticism that are as impregnable as the Copernican astronomy. That is the first impression. But when we consider that fifty years ago, and less even, the radical theologians were wasting their strength in the endeavor to reconcile Genesis and science ; when we consider that twenty years ago the Old Testament criticism, which is now the common property

of orthodox critics, was utterly abominable to them, and even to some Unitarians ; when we consider how much has been done by those to whom the truth has been made clear to obscure it and to make it void,—when we consider all these things, we need not wonder that in the same city, in the same *Monday Times* or *Tribune*, we have differences centuries wide,—there mediævalism pure and undefiled, and here a rationalism as uncompromising as the orthodoxy of Jonathan Edwards.

I think I do not underrate the importance of the revolution that is now in full career. Its central fact is the disintegration of the Bible. Hardly one stone of it is left upon another in the traditional place. The whole of it, with the exception of a few prophetic writings in the Old Testament and a few Epistles in the New, are now seen to be anonymous or pseudonymous, and to have been written at times quite different from those to which they have been heretofore assigned. Moreover, many of the books—a large majority of them—are evidently stratifications, and not uniform deposits,—the compilations of irresponsible editors, taking with set purpose what they liked and pruning off the rest, and making such additions as they pleased. The results of this process have not been so generally acknowledged in the case of the New Testament as in that of the Old, but this is only because in the latter there was so much more at stake. In Dean Stanley's life, which I have just been reading with great interest, there is an interview between him and Cardinal Newman which is extremely pertinent to the situation. The cardinal urged "once, twice, and thrice the great service which he or any one would render who would draw a distinction between the dissolving criticism of the Old Testament and the Gospels." But, evidently, he felt that, however desirable such a service, he could not render it. "He urged the evidently composite character of the Pentateuch." "It struck me," he said, "the first time I read those chapters in Hebrew." "But then I seem to myself," he added, "to see this same compilatory character in the Gospels."

What he seemed to himself to see is now the commonplace of a criticism which understands that the value of evidence is not affected by the magnitude of the issue at stake. And let me say in this connection that it is impossible to read the more thoughtful Roman Catholic literature of the time, and not recognize that we are all in one boat,—some in the bow, and some in the stern, and some amidships, but all in one boat.

Thus, in the conversation between Stanley and Newman, the latter urged the peculiar need of a Protestant defence of the New Testament against the flood which had submerged the Old, because Protestants had no infallible church to fall back upon. Yet, evidently, he was more anxious than Stanley as to the result. He knew well enough that the character of the New Testament is fundamental to the case of Christianity as a supernatural religion. He knew that the infallibility of the Church is as provocative of criticism as the infallibility of the Bible, and that its chances are the less because it is less wound about with mystery, because the light of history beats on its claims with more relentless force, more terrible illumination. Read Wilfrid Ward, the most brilliant Roman Catholic writer of the day, and from first to last you find him saying, "Come, and let us reason together." It is evident that the Roman Church must rationally justify herself, or lose her hold entirely on the intelligence of the community. It is evident that she cannot rationally justify herself to any one who understands the meaning of her history and the character of her defence.

Now, there are those who fondly trust that what Cardinal Newman hoped for has been accomplished,—that a break-water has been built between the Old Testament and New, so that the flood of criticism which has submerged the former, and crumbled it in pieces and pulverized it into sand, can be kept off from the New Testament writings. Such are but few, if any, among those who have the real fearlessness and veracity of science in their minds and hearts. There are also those who recognize how arbitrary and irrational is any bar-

rier set up between the Old Testament and New, and who bid the critics welcome to the New Testament as to the Old. But they do their best to minimize their critical result. They tell us that New Testament criticism is confined within very narrow limits. Chronologically, it is, as compared with the Old Testament. No New Testament book has been dragged from its traditional moorings, like the Pentateuch, eight or nine centuries. But in every other respect the limits of New Testament criticism have been as ample as the Old. The Pentateuch is not more a compilation than the Gospels. Chronicles do not more pervert the truth of history than the Acts, the New Testament Apocalypse is of one kind with the Old Testament Daniel, the Fourth Gospel a dogmatic reconstruction as clearly as Deuteronomy. Everywhere an unbiassed criticism is abreast of these results. And when we see how quickly the apologists have come over to the critics' ground elsewhere, however stout at first their opposition, it is not over-sanguine to expect that here, also, their opposition to the inevitable will be of short duration.

Again I say, I think I do not overrate the importance of the religious revolution which this disintegration of the Bible necessarily involves. There are those who acknowledge the disintegration, but insist that it leaves the traditional theology of the churches safe and sound. We may admire the courage of such people, but we wonder at the dimness of their sight. We cannot but believe their wish has been the father of their thought. Here are a lot of letters, let us say, that spell Supernatural Revelation, Jesus the Incarnate God, his Resurrection from the Dead, Salvation by his Blood, Total Depravity, Election, Reprobation, and Eternal Punishment. These letters are on separate bits of card, as in your children's game. Make the experiment: spell out these words, then shuffle them vigorously, and throw them on the table. Will they spell again the words Supernatural Revelation, Jesus the Incarnate God, and so on? You know that they will not. Yet that they should do so would not be a whit more strange than that the Old Testament and New, shuffled

as they have been by the critics, should spell again the words, the meanings, of the traditional theology. The shuffled letters can be *made* to spell again the original words. The shuffled Bible cannot be made to spell again the traditional meanings. Any appearance to the contrary is misleading. It is only an appearance. It is not a reality. For, whatever else has happened, this has happened beyond peradventure or recall. The authoritative basis of the traditional theology is gone, — gone forever, forever gone. The natural history of the Bible has resolved that basis into impalpable and invisible dust. A collection of books written for the most part by unknown authors and at unknown times, hacked and hewn by rival editors for different and opposing ends, subject to a thousand chances of addition and subtraction for a thousand years, in its most authentic portions absolutely devoid of anything suggestive of an extra-human source or special inspiration,—a collection of books originating in this fashion can be safely made the authoritative basis of a system of religion and the authoritative sanction of its truth only when we swing our bridges on inverted rainbows, and build their mighty piers, not with the granite of the mountains but with the reflections that they cast on lake or river and the shadows that they throw upon the plain.

Lost as dogma, can the traditional theology be brought back as speculative opinion? In truth, it has been only this from the beginning. It has not been a New Testament theology, but the product of some centuries of “up-in-the-air-balloon work.” But it has claimed a New Testament origin, and its claim has been acknowledged as a valid one till now. That claim being now completely disestablished, and the New Testament itself being stripped of all supernatural authority by the history of its origin and the character of its contents, the traditional theology presents itself to our intelligence precisely on a level with the philosophic speculations of the Middle Ages. Something very different this from the old “Thus saith the Lord.” It is true, but little pains is taken to inform the faithful that their granite base

has been removed, and one of mist and moonshine put in its place. And, where the base and superstructure both are gone, the old orthodox complacency is so much a habit of the blood that we find almost as much of it as ever. Belated heresy is prone to look contemptuously on those who have said all its good things before it, when to say them meant some sterner stuff than is required to say them now. Nevertheless, "all things" do not "remain as they were from the beginning." The deepening consciousness that theology is not dogma, but speculation,—that for "Thus saith the Lord" we have only "Thus saith Augustine and Calvin and Edwards,"—gives fuller scope to the free intellect, which has always had a powerful, although subtle, operation in shaping and reshaping the creed supposed to have come down from heaven, like the black stone of Mecca in one infrangible and unmalleable lump. And the consequence is that the traditional theology, in the very process of its transformation from authoritative dogma into windy speculation, is undergoing changes that leave it as unlike the thing they found it as "In Memoriam" is like Boston's "Fourfold State." As I read now one and now another of the books, thick as the leaves of Vallombrosa, which speculatively reconstruct the old theology, and see how thin and vague it is in them in comparison with the old solid mass and crystalline clearness, how kind and sweet and tender in comparison with the old legal sternness and intolerable pains, I think what music there would be if the old saints and sinners, who believed exactly what they said, should come back and read these modern things. How they would stare! Painted an inch thick with horror, to this soft complexion they have come at length.

Such is the religious revolution that is now going on. And now as to what it means or ought to mean for people of intelligence and social spirit. Let us divide the question, and first ask what it means or should mean for people of intelligence. What it does mean is clear enough. If the intelligence is not very strong and the moral temper is not very

resolute, it means some temporary doubtful satisfaction with some adumbration of the traditional creed, the whole base and superstructure different from the real thing, but called, whole and parts, by the same name, and made-believe to be the same thing with an industrious self-delusion that is seldom perfect and complete. But with many others either the intelligence is too strong or the moral temper is too resolute for such a compromise as this. They know that the "new Orthodoxy" is not the old; that it is opinion, and not dogma; that it has no New Testament warrant, and that, if it had much, this would not mean an ounce of evidence over and above its intrinsic rationality. Whereupon some of them take the agnostic line. This, until very recently, was the orthodox line. Read the literature of the Deistic controversy of the eighteenth century, and you will find the heretics, the Deists, insisting that the light of nature is sufficient for the perception of religious truth, and their orthodox opponents insisting that it is not,—that without revelation we are blind to immortality and God. That way of thinking was the average Unitarian way only half a century ago. Dr. Francis G. Peabody once told me that, in looking over his father's sermons, he found this doctrine fundamental to them all. It is not yet extinct. Within a week I have received the Boyle Lectures for 1893; and what is their argument? This: Fidelity to his own principles, reasonably worked out, will lead the agnostic to confess the traditional creed. That is, Unable to obtain rational certainty of ultimate truths, he will accept the proffered supernatural aid. Sometimes he will, no doubt. Generally, he will do nothing of the sort. He will go part way, and stop. He will accept the agnosticism of theology, re-enforced by the agnosticism of speculative and dogmatic science. But, arguing not from what he wants to what he must have, but from what he clearly has to what he may expect, he finds no reason to expect a supernatural revelation, and no reason to believe that such a revelation has been made. Hence the agnosticism of our time,—an intellectual attitude for

which theology is far more responsible than either science or philosophy. The agnosticism of Herbert Spencer is but an adopted child. Its father was Dean Mansel, who called it "The Limits of Religious Thought." The famous book, so called, was an attempt to compel us to accept the traditional system *as* true, in despair of finding any real truth.

The religious revolution which is now going on means the agnostic attitude for a multitude of intelligent men and women. But the paternity of their attitude is a suspicious circumstance. Here we have a policy like that which shovelled out the surplus to demonstrate the necessity for a protective tariff. The orthodox agnostic shovels out the natural ability of the human mind, in order that he may demonstrate the necessity for a supernatural revelation. But the religious revolution which is now going on does not mean an agnostic attitude for all intelligent people. It ought not to mean so for any. They ought to tear the Danaans bringing gifts,—to suspect the theological bequest to science and philosophy of the agnostic principle. And they will do so more and more. The signs of it are multiplying far and wide. The traditional theology is going out. A reasonable theology is coming in,—a theology very different from the traditional theology in its form and meaning, making no supernatural claim, but relying for its sanction and authority on the natural and inevitable response of reason and imagination and the moral sense to what it has to give. Hardly can it be called a theology at all, it is so little systematic, it presumes to know so little of the most secret counsels of the Most High, it goes into so few particulars concerning the nature and the attributes of God. But here we are individually in a spiritual world, knowing there is a lower and a higher life, and that we ought to choose the higher for its intrinsic worth. Here we are together in a social world, where we can help each other, and where no man can isolate himself, and say, "Shall I not do what I will with mine own?" But grant, it may be said, that such things are real and true, that such relations are inexpugnable and not to be

escaped in act or thought, and that therefore they appeal to all intelligent people to make themselves self-helpful and helpful to each other. Here we have no theology,—in fact, no religion: we have “mere morality,” a good thing in its way, a glorious thing, but yet—“mere morality.” But once more: Here we are in a world, a universe, full of power, beauty, order, intelligence, wisdom, and beneficence, and, no matter for the name by which we call the Being who is the life of all its motion and the heart of all its peace, to be ourselves intelligent is to lift up our minds and hearts with awe and wonder, reverence and trust and loyalty, to this Great Being who so manifests himself to us; and, so doing, we are religious men. But the religion and the morality, however widely separated in their sources, have long been flowing on together, intermingling in one mighty stream; and you could as easily separate the Mississippi and the Missouri as they widen out into Louisiana’s broad lagoons as you could separate religion and morality in their present interplay and interfusion in a thousand aspects of our lives with men and God. Begin at either end, the moral or religious, and work out your idea to its logical result, and you find the other end is reached. Morality implies religion. The power not ourselves that makes for righteousness is an eternal power. It is no mere social push, but a push behind society and antecedent to it,—the earnest expectation of the creation longing for the manifestation of the sons of God. And religion equally implies morality. Let a man’s heart quicken with those sentiments of awe and wonder, gratitude and trust, which are so deeply implicated in an intelligent appreciation of the world, and how can he help desiring, longing, steadfastly resolving, to give himself in earnest service of that Infinite Power whose manifestations have awakened in him all these sentiments? And so religion becomes enthusiasm for humanity,—morality with a divine emphasis and inspiration. The one Life is in everything. There is nothing without it,—nothing without its power and wisdom, nothing without its goodness and its love. And all things are for every

one. Leave out one man or woman, leave out one flower or star, and you and I would not be what we are to-day. All the pasts help us: all the futures beckon us. But if all are so for each, and One, the Infinite, is so for all, is not the converse just as sound and good? And that is, Each for all; each for the Infinite One,—at once morality and religion. There are those, I know well enough, who expect theology to come full circle and to end where it began, having no connection with morality. To me the tendency seems just the other way,—to a more perfect union. For the theology of the future will be in reality what the old theology proudly claimed to be without due warrant,—*Scientia Scientiarum*, the Science of Sciences. God being the Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed, whatsoever we know of anything we know of him as well. “The word of God is not bound.” Astronomy, geology, biology, and all the other sciences are chapters in a Bible that is never shut, parts of a Revelation that will never cease.

Whatever the religious revolution which is now going on *does* mean for people of intelligence, this certainly is what it ought to mean. But no: I will make no such distinction; no such difference. This is what it does mean for all people of intelligence. My phrasing of it they might not accept: my meaning they cannot deny. How often do we come on the assumption that, however it may be with morality, religion is a matter for the weak-minded only, the thoughtless and the uninstructed people of the time! But I cannot conceive of a more mistaken rendering than this. That the uninstructed and the thoughtless, those to whom science is “a garden sealed,” that the weak-minded and the frivolous,—that for these religion should have no meaning, no necessity, no reality, I can easily understand. No, I cannot. For even these have the blue heaven over them, and the many stars; for them the seasons come and go, and there is love stronger than death; and I see not why the wonder and the mystery of it all should not attune their hearts to some such music as that we rightly call religion.

But, if such cannot escape it, how much less can they who have bared their minds and hearts to all the beauty of the world, who have read its shining laws in greatest things and least! The more intelligent, the more instructed, the more sure are we to vibrate in unison with that emotion which, since man was man, has stirred in him ineffable thoughts as he has looked abroad upon the external world, and down into the abysmal deeps of his own consciousness of what he is and what he ought to be.

By this time you have probably forgotten that ten minutes back I said I would divide my question, and first consider what the religious revolution means for people of intelligence. And now I have done this after a fashion. But the other part of my original question still remains. What does the religious revolution now proceeding mean for people who have, not merely intelligence, but social spirit? It means that they must do their best to make the things which they believe in flourish and prevail. If men still believe in the traditional system of religion, let them do their best for that. Men who do actually believe in it cannot do too much. They should not stand upon the order of their going to seek out and save the lost, but they should go at once. Whatever a man heartily believes in, that he ought to serve with his time, with his money, with his heart and soul: if Calvinism, that; if atheism, that. Thoreau imagined that atheism might be comparatively respectable with God. Yes, if the atheist has such a passionate sincerity in his unbelief that he must publish it, let who will hear him or forbear. Whatever the belief, it counts for little so long as it is held in selfish isolation. I would rather take my chances with a squad of the Salvation Army, ignorant, vulgar, and sincere, than with a coterie of men "holding no form of creed, but contemplating all," or holding to the most rational and exalted order of belief, yet doing nothing for its social propagation.

And just here, it must be confessed, we come upon the spot that ails the worst in the body of our religious revolution.

We find plenty of men and women whose culture and intelligence compel them to give up the traditional system, and prevent their taking any attitude of mere negation or aggressive unbelief. Intellectually and morally, they appreciate the reality of religion as man's sense of his relation to a Universal Power and his conversion of that sense into a binding law of life. But they do not care enough for it to give up their own cushioned ease and luxury, and go out into the press of men and find those who believe with them, and say to them: "Come, let us see if there be not some company of people working for these things to whom we may join ourselves. Or, if there be none such, let us ourselves make a beginning." I see not how men can appreciate that reality of religion which inheres in duty bravely done, and in the great lift of the heart to the eternal power and beauty of the world, and be content to isolate themselves, as many do, and let others do the work and win the victory. So doing, they cannot appreciate the reality of this religion; or, however it has impressed their minds, it has never touched their hearts. If it had done so, the word in their hearts would be like a fire shut up in their bones; they would be weary with forbearing, and they could not stay.

Said Martin Luther, "I tell our Lord God plainly that, if he will have his Church, he must keep it himself, for we cannot keep it; and, if we could, we should be the proudest asses under heaven." But the same Martin Luther said, "God cannot get along without strong men." There may be truth and soberness in the former saying, but in the latter there is more for us to take to heart. Religion will not die. A development that has been more characteristic of humanity than any other has something in it harder than the teeth of time. The question is, Shall the new Church of God, named or unnamed, the new Church of the human Jesus and all just and holy souls, the new Church of science and humanity, come soon or late, and shall it come with or without our love and service, with or without our sacrificial pains? Believe me, it will surely come; and, when it comes, it shall be worthy

of men's gladness in the perfect world and of their mutual help and cheer. No temple shall be grander than its worship, no music sweeter than its praise. And happy shall those be who can remember then that, when it was the least of all the churches in the world, they gave to it the best blood of their hearts.

“I tremble, not with terror, but with hope,
As the great day reveals its coming scope :
Never in earlier days, our hearts to cheer,
Have such bright gifts of heaven been brought so near ;
Nor ever has been kept the aspiring soul
By space so narrow from so grand a goal.”

MEN'S NEED OF RELIGION.

THERE are those who do not think that such a need exists. Some of them believe it never has existed. Any opinion to the contrary has been, they say, a mere superstition or the device of priests intent on their own practical good fortune. So far from being needed, they assure us, the need to get rid of it has been imperative. And they tell us why. They say they will not take the statements of its enemies, but will let its friends declare what evils it has wrought with its asceticisms, starving and lacerating human flesh, making the marriage of true minds and hearts a shameful thing compared with the renouncement and refraining of the monk and nun; making the uses of the mind equally with those of the body an accursed thing,—to think a fault, to reason a crime, to investigate a sin, to doubt damnation. To its asceticisms add, they say, its persecutions: think of men—ay, and of tender women—imprisoned, tortured, burned; thrown to the wild beasts of the arena; swathed in tow and pitch, to light the streets of Rome; slain by thousands in religious wars; long years pent in such dungeons that any death that the inquisitor's infernal ingenuity could devise would be a glad release. Last, but not least, they say, consider what a waste of energy there has been in religion, what time given to it that might have been given to something else and something better, what a real heaven might have been made out of this brown old earth if half the energy had gone to dressing and to keeping it which has gone to the making of creeds impossible to believe or comprehend, to the imagination of impossible heavens and intolerable hells.

But there are those who, while allowing all these painful facts, are too evolutionary in their philosophy to think that

anything which has been so prominent and engrossing in the world's history has been imposed upon humanity, and is not a natural product of its teeming life. But among these there are many who would say that, whatever need there has been of religion in the past, there is no longer any need of it. It has played its part, and done its work. It may exist for some time longer, but it will lag superfluous on the stage. It will be one of those survivals of which there are so many, — customs, institutions, forms of architecture, dress, and speech which have no logical relation to men's present life. In the words of Paul, they seem to hear the words of universal man, declaring, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I thought as a child, I understood as a child; now I am a man, I put away childish things,"— religion with the rest. Business, art, science, politics, domestic comfort, and felicity,— these are manly things for manly men. These are sufficient to fill up the measure of their days.

As between this interpretation and the other, you are, perhaps, prepared to find the second far more rational. But is it actually so? For one, I cannot wonder that men's judgment of religion, looking back over the past, has been so damaging. It is the superficial aspects that impress us, and they are not beautiful or engaging to the backward look. Murder will out, and so will persecution. So, too, will superstition and every baser thing; but the best things are quiet as the starlight and the dawn. That the thing which has been will be is not a whit more true than that the thing which is has been,—the exploiting of all baser things, the hiding of the better things in God. The witchcraft delusion was not all there was of religion in Salem and Marblehead and Boston two hundred years ago. There was much lifting of the heart to a divine ideal of justice, truth, and love; much resting of men's broken strength upon the infinite right arm. And what was true in 1692 in the coast towns of Massachusetts has been as true in times and places where the Salem persecution would have been a beautiful amenity in comparison with the things actually done. Beyond the

superficial ugliness, the beauty of religion hid itself away in myriads of tender, trusting hearts. Taking the superficial aspect, I do not wonder that so many men of kindly heart have denounced religion as a base, unnatural thing, and have insisted that we need no more of it. We *should* need no more of it if it had been only what it has been in its most obvious character, and if it could be only that now and hereafter.

But, if what I may call the vulgar theory has the more obvious truth, it is the scientific, the evolutionary, that commands our deeper thought. Every chapter of anthropology and archæology and ancient history goes to the proving of the naturalness, the inevitableness, of religion. Given human nature as it has been at any time during its long, eventful course, which began not four thousand, but four hundred thousand years before Christ's nativity, and religion of some sort it must have as naturally, as inevitably, as the young child its mother's welcome breast. Those priestly hierarchies on which the Volneys and the Paines, the Voltaires and Rousseaus and Ingersolls, have poured out their contempt, have been the products, not the causes, of religion. Too flattering has been the estimate of their intellectual and executive ability. Though every priest had been a Hildebrand, their banded strength could not have produced those things which have made up the sum-total of religion. Only the spontaneous energy of human nature, confronted by the mystery of the universe, the deeper mystery of human life, was equal to the production of those things. Our scientific evolution has done nothing here but fill in and confirm and illustrate the psalm which was written for us and coming generations at a time when scientific evolution was a far-off event.

“ Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias brought;
Never from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;
Out from the heart of nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;

The litanies of nations came,
 Like the volcano's tongues of flame,
 Up from the burning core below,—
 The canticles of love and woe;
 The hand that rounded Peter's dome,
 And groined the aisles of Christian Rome,
 Wrought in a sad sincerity;
 Himself from God he could not free.

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The passive Master lent his hand
 To the vast soul that o'er him planned,"—

the vast soul of humanity, which, because born of God, yearns ever for his face.

How then? Is not the evolutionary theory of religion much more rational than the theory of mechanical imposition? It is, and it is not. It is more rational as an account of what has been already. It is less rational when, natural selection having done its part, artificial selection proposes to eliminate religion as it is from the new order of the world. I could sooner think that all the past religion of the world was the mechanical imposition of designing men than I could believe that, having after long gestation brought Religion as it is to birth, Humanity will lay violent hands on her own child, that she will not guard him and cherish him until a lusty manhood shall redeem the promise of his sprawling youth. But let her try it, if she has a heart for it. Let her with Spartan rigor cast the bantling on the barren rocks! Think you for him there should not be some she-wolf teat to nourish him, some peasant brawn to dote upon his golden locks, his sturdy strength of limb, until some day Humanity should know him for her own, and fold him to her lonely heart? Artificial selection can do much. It can chalk a rabbit or a pigeon on the wall, and then breed a live one after that pattern. But, when it tries to breed a man, a humanity, without religion, it will find that it has taken a contract which it cannot carry out. After a thousand beautiful experiments the subject will revert to the original type.

“Man cannot be God’s outlaw if he would,
Nor so abscond him in the caves of sense
But nature still shall find some crevice out
With messages of splendor from that Source
Which, soar he, dive he, baffles still and lures.”

So far are we from having reached through natural selection, with its struggle for existence and its survival of the fittest, a stage at which religion is not fitted any longer to survive, that never was man’s need of it so great as now, never before was it so fitted to the aspirations of his mind and the affections of his heart. I know well enough what can be said for the abundant riches of our human life. Consider what they are, to the end that, having done so, we may ask, Are they sufficient for our need without religion, or do they demand religion for their explanation, and implicitly contain the essence of its power and peace? And, first, so much of them as we take hold of with our senses five or more. If the eye is never satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing, it is not because the bounty that is purveyed to them is stinted in the least degree. Like the lame man in the New Testament story, we are brought every day and laid at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful; and the beauty of it falls upon our eyes and sinks into our hearts. “If the stars should appear but for one night in a thousand years,” you know the words, “how would men wonder and adore, and preserve for many generations the remembrance of that city of God which had been shown! But every night appear those envoys of beauty, and light the earth with their admonishing smile.” Does the perpetual repetition dull the edge of our delight? If we take such things for granted, is it not that we are royal born, and so all best things come as natural to us as the fine bed and sumptuous chamber did to the chimney-sweep in Lamb’s delightful tale? I know that one has said that

“Only those who in sad cities dwell
Are of the green trees fully sensible.”

But I have thought another wiser who declares that it is only those who live with Nature all the year round and all their lives long who have complete enjoyment of her loveliness. It is not so rhapsodical, but in its quietness there is a rarer sweetness of delight. And it is certain that for some of us who dwell in cities, which are not wholly sad, each spring and early summer seems the most beautiful that we have ever known. Why, then, should any repetition tire? And, if it could, it is not as if Nature had not her seasonal variety, helping us evermore to sing,—

“How sweet, O Lord, are thy returns!”

But I speak too much as if our conversation with the world were only through our eyes, as if there were no rustling of leaves, no sound of falling waters, no booming of the sea, no “men in armor rolling down the stairs of heaven,” no voices that by their sound alone, and not by what they say, enchant our ears, no music of Beethoven and Mozart and Mendelssohn, and all the other workers of the lovely miracles of melody and harmony. And, if the satisfactions of our other senses are not equal to those of sight and hearing, surely they are not by any means to be despised. Those of smell and taste, we are assured, have more associative power than any of the rest; but they do not need this spiritual addition to commend them to our gratefulness. Never have we less call “to scorn the senses’ sway” than when we smell the rose in June, the earth’s own breath in wild-flowers of the spring, or, best of all, the pines after the rain. To loftily disdain the joys of taste may be the proper thing; but those who have a tendency to speak the truth will cheerfully acknowledge that there is something very pleasant in their constant ministration. One must be blind, perhaps, to know what joys there are in touch, as when Michel Angelo, old and blind, used to pass his hands over the Torso in the Vatican, and thrill with exquisite delight; but even for those less fortunate, if I may say so, they are not to be despised. Of their symbolic uses friends and lovers know, and sorrow-

ing hearts to whom a silent hand-clasp may be more than speech.

It is the cant of a self-conscious spirituality and of tyros in philosophic idealism to talk disparagingly of the senses. But so long as there are "no joints in the illusion," as Emerson has said, I do not see that an idealistic interpretation of the senses makes them less wonderful; and, as for the self-conscious spirituality that despises them, "one impulse from a vernal wood" seems to me often better than its vapid dreams. It is a strange corollary of the high faith that God is all in all that all the lovely appearance of the world in which he manifests himself to us is to be utterly contemned. It makes but little difference to me what part our organism has in shaping that appearance. "Pleads for itself the fact"; and I can never cease from wondering at that beautiful conspiracy of subject and object, the me and the not-me, self and the world, which gives us those concrete results of seeing, hearing, and so on, that make up the sum of our relations to external things.

Consider what they are, I said,—the riches of our human life; and, so far, I have only hinted at so much of them as comes to us along the avenues of sense. Now let us add to these the riches of the mind. An easy thing to say. Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of—man! Even so much of them as we call science is a boundless store; even so much of this as is within the reach of humble men, who are not scientific, but who know the crumbs which the great chiefs of science drop from their tables as they sit at joyful feast. Take a first-rate general treatise on astronomy, and others on geology and biology and anthropology and physiology and psychology,—books which a man of business could read through in a year, and still have time enough to read the newspapers as much as they deserve, and get some lighter recreations,—and what different skies would arch him over, what a different earth would underlie his feet, how different to him would be his own body, and every fellow-creature's house of life! But

the riches of science are only a little fraction of the riches of the mind. There are also those of history and philosophy, those of the various arts, painting and sculpture, bidding the happy moment stay, the poem and the novel, making real to us the happy sequence of the natural and human world. Oh, yes, indeed,—

“There are in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime.”

And something of their peace and quietness has become a part of our habitual lives, to be removed from us no more forever.

You must not fail to see the forest for the trees: you must not lose the drift of my discourse in the details which I am heaping up to show how rich our human life is or may be *apparently without religion*. And even on the intellectual side there is much more than I have said. There is the active side, while that of which I have so far spoken is the passive. But what proportion do you imagine the passive enjoyment of great works of literature and art bears to the active joy of causing them to be? Mrs. Browning says of the mother of Aurora Leigh, “She could not bear the joy of giving life: the mother’s rapture slew her.” And I have often wondered less at the creations of high genius than that the men so dowered could see such things and live,—that the “great trembling of the heart” which Newton had when he drew near to the end of his sublime demonstration was not so great as to shake his life forever from its seat; that it was not so with Darwin when his splendid generalization swung like a star upon his mind; with Grove and Mayer when they attained to their great law of conservation; with Lockyer, or some other, when the spectroscope took up the wondrous tale; with Tennyson when, having written “Ulysses,” he laid down his pen; with Lowell when, instead, they found him sleeping at his desk with a most

happy smile upon his face, and before him, finished, the "Commemoration Ode"; with Raphael when the Sistine Mother grew to completeness under his breathless spell; with Beethoven when his listening mind caught the great music which outwardly he might never hear. I know that the Beethovens, Raphaels, Lowells, Tennysons, Darwins, and Newtons are but few out of the many of the host of intellectual workmen; but I also know that something of their joy, their thrill, their rapture, is inseparable from all faithful intellectual work,—that, if even the minister's sermon could give to those who hear it a hundredth part of the keen delight and satisfaction, strangely mixed of pleasure and of pain, that he has in writing it, they would come to hear him every Sunday morning, and would wish that there were twice as many Sundays in the year.

Man's life is thought, emotion, will. We may separate these things in our analysis, but in life they are forever one. I have been speaking of the thought-side; but how much emotion was involved, and how much will! Thought is itself a form of action, but there are other forms in which the element of will is much more obvious. These are the forms of action with which the great majority of men are most concerned. They make up the immense variety of our industrial organization and our household cares. Our trade, our politics, our social help, are all upon their list. And what delight there is in them! The industrial reformer often writes and speaks as if the minimum of labor were the maximum of joy, but there are some of us who read in quite a different way the riddle of the time. "Life would be so pleasant, were it not for its pleasures," said a hard worker of the century; and he spoke in order that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed. The man who does not enjoy his work more than his play is a poor forked radish, not a real man. But the enjoyment is not wholly in the exercise of will. It is also in the exercise of thought.

"Who sweeps a room as to thy laws
Makes that and th' action fine."

But that implies thinking how it should be swept, what is God's law in the matter of sweeping rooms. Forever blessed be the memory of the little housemaid who knew that she had got religion because she swept under the mats! And it is so with every kind of work. We distinguish men of thought from men of action, but the men of action keep up a terrible thinking on their own account. What do you think? Did the fighting of Grant's battles require less thought than his writing of them or infinitely more? Our great financial and political schemers are set down as men of action. But are they not also men of thought? What would be the consistency or success of a great political or commercial combination that had no thought in it or a very little? "A cipher with the rim removed." And I like to think, and am persuaded that I do not think irrationally, that no mere sordid thirst for gain or spoils is the sole inspiration of these political and financial gladiators striving for the mastery in the arenas of our public and commercial life, but the joy of intellectual battle, the proving of their intellectual strength, their judgment, foresight, perspicacity. However this may be, I know that work in all its glorious range, from the most humble useful service up to that which wins a nation's victories or shapes its laws or develops its industrial resources, is a joy as much more desirable than idleness or play as quiet sleep is better than a tossing night, or a good conscience better than the shame which reddens us all over when we are alone with the accusing voice.

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the thinking and doing of man, and of that emotional life which we separate from these in our thought, but which is never separated from them in the living web of things! We have seen how it enters into the processes of thought, how it touches as with golden light the problem of the investigator, the painter's picture, and the poet's song, the splendid tussles of the political and commercial world, the doing and the finishing of any honest piece of work. It has its roots — this emotional factor of our lives — in mere sensation; its highest branches

sway and swing in that pure air whose vital currents are the affections of the human heart.

“The sense of the world is short,—
Long and various the report,—
To love and be beloved;
Men and gods have not outlearned it,
And, how oft soe'er they've turned it,
'Tis not to be improved.”

A thousand and ten thousand novels and romances, poems, pictures, plays, are but the illustrations of the sage's aphoristic song. A hundred million idyls and comedies and tragedies of friendship and affection and impassioned love in warm and breathing life find in the poets and the painters only faint echoes and reflections of their joy and pain. The old story this of which humanity is never tired. We see its relish for it wherever there are young hearts beating high with mutual devotion, wherever the happy marriage justifies Theodore Parker's dream and is a long falling in love, wherever the great miracle of birth is wrought anew, and fond parental hearts flutter and sing and agonize and pray over the growing child, where brotherly and sisterly fidelity almost makes it seem that surely this is the best love of all, wherever noble friendship will not flatter or caress the loved one's fault, but will demand the best that he can give.

Such are the riches of humanity, and they are more than these. The best has not been told. That is obedience to the moral law, allegiance to ideal truth and holiness. You might well say that I had come late to it, and that I make brief tarrying with it, were it not that we have been walking with it all the way, as the disciples walked with Jesus on their way to Emmaus, in the lovely tale, but knew him not. Take ethics out of art, and how it would shrivel to the merest fraction of its present amplitude, and how would all its gold and splendid color become pale and dim! There would be no Book of Job, of all poems of a remote antiquity the most colossal and divine, there would be no Homer

or Æschylus or Sophocles, no "Euripides the human, with his droppings of warm tears," no Dante,—for his triple world was but a shadow of the moral life of man,—no "Macbeth" or "Lear" or "Hamlet" or "Othello," to make no mention of a thousand lesser things. And, if in losing ethics we should lose so much of art, how much more should we lose of life, of which art is only one aspect! Take the moral purpose out of work in its imperial range, and what would the residuum be worth? The immoral or unmoral statesman or captain of war or industry,—what an inverted hero he! But again I am forgetting that the great things are only for a few. Nay, but it is the moral purpose, the fidelity, the sacrifice, which makes the small things great. There is no humblest task on which a man can put forth the strength there is in him which, measured by the moral law, is not more excellent, more wonderful, and more inspiring than the most brilliant things that an immoral genius can conceive or an immoral giant can perform.

Now comes the parting of the ways. If all these things are possible *without religion*,—this sensuous apprehension of the fair and teeming world; this scientific understanding of it and the wide range of intellectual satisfactions and delights; and then the active world, all that man wills and does from daily task-work up to deeds that shake and build again the States and institutions of the world; last, but not least, all the affections and the strivings of the emotional and moral life,—if all these things are possible *without religion*, how does man need religion? My answer is, If all these things were possible without religion, then never could man's need of it be shown. "I am come that ye may have life," says the Fourth Gospel Jesus, "and that ye may have it more abundantly." What loftier aim than that! And, if men can have life, and have it with immeasurable abundance without religion's upward look of reverence and awe and trust and loyalty, then may we confidently say, He does not need religion. For religion, as I take it, is not something quite apart from all the rest of life, an extra faculty,

an isolated experience. Parcel and part of all, it keeps the festival, or it has no reason to exist. It is implicated in the whole of life. Like to that scarlet thread which runs through every cable, rope, and line of the royal British navy, and declares their national ownership, religion is "that thread of all-sustaining beauty which runs through all" the circumstances and events, and powers and graces, of our human life, and declares for each and every one of them the ownership of Heaven, and allies them each and all with the Eternal Wisdom and the Primal Love which we call God,—not as if any name were adequate, but because all names alike are so inadequate that old affection and association may as well have their way.

The only religion that is good for much is that which cannot be denied or disallowed by any reasonable and earnest soul. So Emerson intended when he said that there should be a statement of religion which would make atheism impossible. If the great facts of life could be stated in such a way as to make religion an external thing, then it might well be left in outer darkness till the end of time. But some of you, I am quite sure, as I went on making my summary of things possible without religion, felt at every turn that religion had not been left out, that it was implicated all along. I knew well enough that it was so; but it was not my fault. I did my best to make the statement *unreligious*. It was impossible: *to state the facts of life is to affirm religion*.

"They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings."

Is it the sensuous aspect of the world with which we deal? But who can take that aspect home to mind and heart and not find in it the Manifestation of a Power, not ourselves, that makes for order, beauty, and beneficence, and not lift up a tender, awed, and grateful heart to the Eternal Life of Life? Is it the intellectual aspect of humanity that attracts our thought? Eliminate the religious element from litera-

ture and art, and for the desiccated corpse remaining who would care? But that, even, is a little matter in comparison with the persuasion that a universe which needs mind for its interpretation cannot have been originated by any lesser thing than Mind. And so it is comparatively a little matter that the greatest doers of the world have all been men in conscious fellowship with God, while it is quite another thing that all men everywhere who toil and sweat are fellow-workmen with the Eternal, earning no miserable pittance merely for the day's meat and drink, but some increment of soul to make them worthier of their high descent and sure of their immortal destiny. "But surely," some one will suggest, "if we can have love enough, we can get along without religion, without God. Nay, but the more we love, the more we need a trust which, when the grave of some beloved one opens at our feet, shall spring an arch across that infinite abyss, over which any minute of the sleepless night or busy day our hope and our imagination may go over into communion with our friend, and return with happy confidence that all is well.

The moral aspect yet remains for a concluding word. There are most noble spirits in our time who would insist upon the insufficiency of the sensuous, or the intellectual, or the active, or the emotional principle, or all these together, for life's completeness. But add the moral, and we have, they say, enough. But not all who have been held accountable for this opinion have rightly been so held; and one to whom the majesty of ethics has appeared as to but few, our noble Gannett, has affirmed and amply shown that "ethics thought out is religious thought; ethics felt out is religious feeling; ethics lived out is religious life." And he has done this, not as some do, by simply calling ethics religion, as if that would make it so, but by clearly exhibiting and demonstrating that one cannot think of morals deeply, or feel concerning them profoundly, or live a grandly moral life without finding his moral thought and feeling and purpose taking hold on universal principles and relations, rising into an atmosphere of infinite height, consciously relating itself to

one who, *call* Him what we may, "is yet the fountain-light of all our day, is yet the master-light of all our seeing."

Never before, I said, was man's need of religion so great as it is now. Why but because never before has it so freed itself from superstition, so that the good of it remains without the curse and shame. Why but because, again, the unities of science lead us, each and all, into the presence of one central unity, and all the mysteries of science lead us into the presence of one central mystery, and this mystery and unity are one; and all that science has to tell goes to increase the grandeur and the awfulness of that mysterious Unity. For nothing can be clearer than that our evolutionary science implicitly, if not explicitly, affirms an infinite element in every stage of evolution,—that is to say, nothing evolved which is not first involved, no greater things from less save as a greatest makes the less the channel of its power. And, because this greatest One from whom has streamed the ordered universe demands from us a far more reverent worship than any God of the traditional theology, men need religion now as never in the world before,—need it as the premises of logic the conclusion they involve. The religious attitude is the supreme necessity, to which all knowledge, science, and experience run as rivers to the sea. In the language of philosophy, the reasonable must be the real.

I need not say that I have not the slightest sympathy with those who find no ground or sanction for morality save in dogmatic certainties of God's existence and the Immortal Life. But the temptations to wrong-doing never were so great as in the complex development of our modern life. "Tis a good seaman who can keep a steady keel on such a swelling sea. To say that Jesus of Nazareth was "tempted in all points like as we are" is to use time-honored words that have no meaning. If the married state is full of blessedness, surely it has its own temptations,—to be selfish and unjust; to make our fond anxiety the law of our parental rule. Jesus knew nothing of all this; nothing of

our enormous stress and strain of modern competition ; nothing of modern politics, with their base solicitations for ambitious men. Temptation never was before so manifold and subtle as it is to-day ; and for this reason we need religion now as men have never needed it,—need to feel that our morality is no accident of social prejudices or contrivances, but the projection of a moral universe which is the manifestation of a moral God. If God be for us, who can be against us? And he is for us, in that right-doing is in the line of his eternal evolution ; and, when we cleave to that, we cleave to him, and need not be afraid. Here is no bartering for future bliss, but the step that quickens and the heart that warms to a music that God breathes forever through the universe of souls, which is, as is not that of any choir invisible, the gladness of the world.

Once more. Now, as men never did before, we need the hope of an immortal life. Affection may not yearn for dear ones lost to sight a whit more tenderly to-day than when Cordelia lay upon the breast of Lear or David mourned for Jonathan with love passing the love of women. But now, as never in the world before, the passionate yearning to explore the mystery of life resents annihilation as a base affront. And with the greater need there comes the greater hope, seeing that, in a world so wonderful as that which science has revealed, nothing can be too grand to be believed,—the grander, the more likely to be true ; and seeing that the correlation of this hope with all that is most high and pure and grand and lofty in our moral life is as God's pledge — unless that life be none of his — that he will satisfy our hope with a reality as great as our desire.

Do we believe these things? If we do *not*, they have no claim on our devotion or self-sacrifice. But, if we do, we shall not be content with taking our own joy in them with easy, selfish satisfaction. We shall gird ourselves to make our glorious message known to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, that for them also light may spring up, and our joy may be in them.

THE GREAT REFUSAL.

ONE of the many phrases that Dante has contributed to universal literature is that in the third book of the *Inferno* which reads, in the original, *il gran rifiuto*, and, in the translation, "the great refusal" or "the great rejection." The individual accused of having made the great refusal — one of those caitiffs who were neither for God nor for his enemies, too base to enter hell — was Pietro Morrone, who was made Pope in 1294. He was an old man, eighty years old; and the dignity was thrust upon him much against his will. After five months he wearied of its weight, resigned his office, and went back to his hermitage, an object of the general scorn. I do not propose to enter into the merits of his case. Robert Browning could probably have said much in his favor, and others less ingenious could probably suggest some palliations of the poor old man's astonishing proceeding.

The great refusal! The phrase is Dante's, but the thing is of no special place or time. Nor is it of any special character, either good or bad. Dante tells us that it was through cowardice that Celestine made his great refusal. Many are the great refusals that are made from cowardice; but as many, if not more, are made from courage. The thing refused is oftener bad than good. Were it not so, the social world would be going down, down, down; and, in fact, it is going up, up, up; present appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. We must not mistake a frothy eddy, which catches and whirls round all manner of dead wood and rubbish, for the main current of the stream.

It was a great function which Celestine V. renounced. In the eyes of his contemporaries there was none greater possible; for was not a pope Christ's, God's, vicegerent, bearing

rule for him over the whole church, over the whole world? Our modern view contemplates no such function as a reality of possible relations between man and God. But what the pious Catholic conceived as a reality inherent in the individual pope, what he still so conceives, the wiser mind conceives as a reality inherent in humanity. That is God's great vicegerent. That may or it may not refuse its office, abdicate its glorious seat, go sneaking off into a base retirement from the world's dust and heat. What is much more to the point is this: that any individual can act in such a way as would, if everybody acted so, mean that humanity had made the great refusal. We are like soldiers in a battle. We do not know how it is going. The field is wrapped in smoke. The noise is horrid in our ears. The day may be already lost. What is that to us? We have our post. We have our orders for the day. We have the immediate command. The battle is not our affair, but only our own part. Yet it may be that our own steadfastness shall turn the fortunes of the fight.

Pietro Morrone, you will remember, was an old man, eighty years old, when they made him Pope Celestine V. in the year 1294. In 1894 it is to the young men that the spirit speaks, because they are strong, and tells them that they are God's vicegerents each and all, and offers to them power and sway. We do not wonder when we see Gladstone — the grand old man — let slip the British Empire from his back, though we may wish he had endured unto the end. At eighty-four a man might be forgiven easily for loosening a burden of less weight than his, even that of the proverbial grasshopper if it pressed too hard. But that young men and young women, full of life and health and strength, should make the cowardly refusal, — should be willing to forego their part in building up God's kingdom among men, — why, this is passing strange.

One in the Bible found no place for repentance when he had once refused the blessing, though afterward he sought it diligently and with tears. But the habit of the world is not

so hard as this : there are many places for repentance. The blessing once refused, the opportunity once rejected, is not forfeited forever. It comes again, and yet again, and tempts us with the temptation of God. I have said before, and I say again, let no man believe Lowell when he sings,—

“Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of truth with falsehood, for the good or evil side.”

At the very time he sung it, did we not choose the evil side? And yet we had another chance. Then we chose well; but, surely, it was not a final choice. If we could believe it was, we should be—oh, how much happier than we are! But we have a “Present Crisis” now as vital and important as that which pressed upon our national life in 1844. It is more serious; for then we had a terrible, gigantic, concrete wrong appealing to men’s moral indignation. We had a great and growing party pledged to its destruction. And what have we now? A decay of patriotism, a neglect of public duty, and a shirking of responsibility,—which things are no respecters of parties and infect the loftiest reputations with their insidious disease. We have a demagoguery to which votes are everything,—law, order, justice, nothing in comparison,—which calls a mob of vagrants “an industrial army,” and would feast and flatter it, lest haply it should go sneaking home and vote one side or the other up or down. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. For all the heroisms and nobilities which have succored our beloved country in the past, her feet are on the slippery edge of an incline down at whose bottom lie the miserable wrecks of many nations that have “through cowardice made the great refusal” of the best and honorablest things. One of the saddest things is this: that you will find good men depreciating the great names and high examples of the past,—names and examples once as dear to them as their own souls,—in order that they may not feel too painfully the difference between the tricksters of the later and the statesmen of the earlier time.

Well, as it is with nations, so is it with individuals. It is never too late to do well ; but it is harder every year if we neglect the good opportunity. The grooves of habit deepen and invite the stimulus which, coursing through them, sweeps away the half-reluctant will. If a man is going to earn his living, he cannot begin too soon. By earning his living I do not mean earning his board and clothes, his horses and his yachts, the various appliances of comfort and of luxury that are the desiderata of our modern life. I mean some title to the privilege of living in a social world which has inherited from an illimitable past an incalculable stock of social benefits. The business man is much mistaken if he thinks that the net proceeds of his business are all his wages of superintendence, and that he can do what he will with his own. They are to a very great degree a product of the social organization, and they are his to that degree in trust for the same social organization which has credited them to his account. What is conspicuously true of the man of business, the man of wealth, is just as true, though less conspicuously, of every man in the community. Other men have labored, and he enters into their labors. The matter of individual inheritance is in serious doubt. The matter of social inheritance does not admit of any. Here is this social organization which is running every manufacturer's loom, tending every farmer's field, literally to an unconscionable degree. And hence it happens that we are not our own ; that the law of *noblesse oblige* is laid upon us ; that our advantages are obligations ; that, having freely received, we must also freely give ; that there is not a tramp in Coxey's army so disreputable as the man who, with an inherited fortune, imagines it is his to spend for his own comfort, luxury, or advantage, regardless of the fact that it has been amassed not mainly by his father's or his grandfather's tireless industry, but mainly by a certain organization of society which has a lien upon it that is quite as good as any private claim.

The great refusal is made up of many smaller ones. One

of these is the refusal of a man to take his proper place in the great body politic. And this means a good deal more than voting when election day comes round or confirming one's self in a particular opinion by reading this or that partisan paper the other three hundred and sixty-four days of the year. It means studying our national history and acquainting one's self with its great names and great events. It means some vital comprehension of the great struggles of the century, of the forces that contributed to the making of our constitution, and those that have contributed to its amendment and interpretation; some knowledge of the rise and history of our great parties, with which to check on either side the immitigable stuff and nonsense that is fulminated as the political wisdom of the hour. It means some study of political economy, not as it is formulated for electioneering purposes, but as it illuminates the pages of the most scientific students of the matter. The young man who is not equal to these things is not equal to the privilege of citizenship. The young man by whom they are deliberately neglected should betake himself beyond the boundaries of the United States, and to some place where there is no government or where there is a limitation of the suffrage, excluding those who have not common honesty or common sense; for, unless these are wanting, I see not how any man, young or old or middle-aged, can willingly forego his proper part in the great business of our national and various local governments. I know well enough the sleek, self-satisfied, superior air with which our golden youth announce their indifference to political affairs. I know how smart they seem unto themselves, how silly to the better sort. I know how perfectly absurd the enthusiasms of the youthful politician often are. But they cannot be so absurd that they will not be better, infinitely better, than the sublime indifference of the conceited Gallios who care for none of these things. It is very pleasant — is it not? — to take up the *Nineteenth Century* or the *Contemporary Review* with the most agreeable anticipations, and find upon the cover this title of an article,—

"The Utter Corruption of American Politics." There is not a young man in America who, reading such a title, should not know whether or not it corresponds to something actual in our political life. If it does, he should take counsel with the noble patriot who sang,—

"I loved my country so as only they
Who love a country fit to die for may;
I loved her old renown, her stainless fame,—
What better proof than that I loathed her shame?"

If the railing accusation is but partly true, then should not every noble youth, every good man, determine that it shall not be true at all? Believe me, once fairly over the edge of the fight into the thick of it, there is something here more satisfying to the stout heart of youth than any of its jolly games or idle vanities. One of the euphemisms of modern speech is to call that life "robust" which does not shrink from the most poisonous contacts of the social world. And young men like to be robust. But among the trees of God the oak is not so much more robust than the sapling as the young man who does his whole duty in the social order is more robust than the poor, pampered thing who fancies that a life of "pleasure," as they call it, is a life worth living. Did I say the great refusal to be fellow-laborers with God was made up of many smaller ones, and that one of these was to refuse a manly part in the political struggle of the time? Nay, but is not this itself a great refusal, because the thing refused is so immeasurably great, so splendid in its invitation to all generous and noble souls?

Another great refusal which is often made — great and yet, like that which we have been considering, only a little part of that which is the greatest possible — is the refusal to enter into and enjoy that kingdom of scientific knowledge which has been conquered for us by the patient labors of many earnest spirits. I have just now been reading the Life of Edward Livingston Youmans, written by John Fiske, subject and author making sure that we should have a noble

book. And seldom have I encountered one so full of moral inspiration. How many of us, lying down at the first touch of disappointment, or giving way at the first shock of adverse circumstance, or persisting only for a little while, might (surely ought to) take fresh courage from the story of his dozen years of total blindness or of feeble sight, the hope deferred, the miserable relapses, making his heart sick well-nigh to death, but never utterly subduing his indomitable will. We praise the patience with which men bear their limitations and defects. But the splendid thing in Youmans was his grand, unconquerable impatience with his sightless eyes. He would not believe the oculists when they told him that they were a hopeless case. He would not believe the testimony of repeated disappointments following the periods of hope and cheer. And so, with the help of a good sister, he went on studying and waiting until at length for him who sat in darkness light sprang up, and filled his heart with joy.

But the moral inspiration resident in the story of his life is not exhausted by the incidents of his struggle with a great calamity. There is more and better in the ardor and persistency with which he lent himself to the service of Spencer and Tyndall and Huxley and many other kings of science, going before them, as the sappers and miners do before an army's van, that every valley might be exalted, and every mountain and hill brought low, the crooked be made straight, and the rough places plain, that all flesh together might rejoice in them. Here was enthusiasm for science and enthusiasm for humanity at one and the same time.

You may think that by my interest in Professor Youmans I have been distracted from the main current of my thought. I have not been for a moment. I have been willing and glad to hold up to your admiration the image of his superb impatience with his physical defect, and the image of his enthusiasm for others' work, his ability to lose himself in them, his vigorous and untiring propagation of their thought. But all this was merely incidental. Not for a moment had I

forgotten the main current of my thought. And, surely, the relation of Professor Youmans's life and character and work to this must be so obvious that, if I should not indicate the nature of it, it would make little difference, it would so readily occur to you. Was not that kingdom of science on which he was so eager and anxious and resolved to enter, worthy of all his hope, enthusiasm, and resolve? Surely, he found it so, or he would not afterward have toiled so terribly to spread the knowledge of it far and wide, he would not have been so impatient with men's ignorance, so desirous for them to come and see the broad, rich lands, the lofty mountain-tops, the flowing streams. But why do I insist on this? Because all this which was so much to him, which so filled his mind and fired his heart, is to so many nothing that they should desire it. Here is a great refusal: to live in such a house as this, and not explore its vastness, to be contented with a few narrow, faded rooms, and not go up and down, opening the cabinets, seeing the pictures, hearing the music that comes stealing out from many a secret place. It was of science Emerson was speaking when he wrote:—

“Day by day for her darlings to her much she added more;
In her hundred-gated Thebes every chamber was a door,—
A door to something grander, loftier walls and vaster floor.”

But how many of these doors are left, deliberately or carelessly, to hide the things beyond? It would not be so strange if those who made this great refusal to appropriate the scientific meaning of the world did so because of other things that vie with those of science in their power and grace. But how often those who make this great refusal content themselves with things that are not worthy to be named with those which science has revealed! They are like one who, with a lovely palace offered him to range and revel in, contents himself with the kitchen and the stables. The rest may go. These are enough for him.

There is another great refusal. It is to enter into the in-

heritance of those best things thought and written about life which we call literature. Alas! they are not equally free to all; and for some to whom they are as free and open as the day they might as well be shut away by doors of triple iron. Some are cut off from them by the force of circumstance. They have not the money to buy books. They have not the leisure to read them. After the hard day's work the murders and the scandals of the daily press are all that they are equal to before they sleep the sleep exhausted nature craves. And there are some who have abundant time and money; but they are more insuperably shut out, because they have no natural inclination towards the great things of literature. But there are others who neglect the gift that is in them, the gift of generous appreciation for these things. What moors they batten on, when the greenest pastures and the stillest waters are within easy reach! Of course, they do not know how much they miss. If they did, their refusal would be much sadder and much more incomprehensible. It seems impossible that any one should know a hundredth part of all the poets and the other men of letters have to give, and willingly forego so much. Let those who know the most continually do their best to make their treasures known, if haply they may bring some of the most indifferent into the circle of their peace and make them sharers of their joy.

There is one kind of literature, using this designation broadly, which demands a special word. It is of history I speak. Some of it is literature in the highest sense. That is, it has the noble form, the touch of beauty, which makes any book or writing which is literature in the lowest sense literature in the higher or the highest. Whether it is the one thing or the other, it is something that has great rewards, and which cannot be refused without the saddest loss. More than the widest travel, it makes a man a cosmopolitan, not only free of many lands, but equally of many times. And with the biography of greatness and goodness, of wit and humor, of high thought and earnest purpose, it is much

the same. Most men and women are ready, even anxious, to avail themselves of an opportunity to meet this or that person distinguished for some action or ability or striking excellence. But what is such an opportunity, what any number that any individual is likely to enjoy, compared with those which are afforded by the best biographies within our reach? For these admit us to the great ones in their most various moods, now strenuous, now easy and unbent. We can enjoy their letters just as much as those who got them first. Here is a "great, wide, wonderful, beautiful world" of personal life, rich with a thousand novel lights, full of sweet laughter and of sacred tears; and it is indeed a great refusal when one to whom all this is offered waives the proffered gift aside.

Another of the great refusals which men make is that which makes the world of art an unknown world. Of the highest art of all I have already spoken, the literary art. There is no music, no architecture, no painting, or sculpture, which compares with the great things of poetry and imaginative prose; but the other arts, if all looking to one greater, are still great and high. But here, too, we have the subjective limitation. All cannot enter into these with equal freedom and delight. Some of the saddest inequalities of life are here. Generally, when we speak of human inequality, we have a mere financial difference in our minds. It is so with Mr. Henry George when he talks about the rich becoming richer, and the poor becoming poorer,—a thing which is not true. But these inequalities seem to me of slight importance in comparison with those between the people who have, for example, a genius for musical appreciation (to say nothing of musical creation) and those who have no such genius. For those who have it can, almost any time, enter into a beautiful ideal world in which it matters to them very little whether they have much money or a little.

"They envy not King Gyges' gold,
Nor all his Lydian coffers hold."

Here, again, for one who knew the riches of the proffered world and could freely enter into it, to wilfully refuse the privilege would be an impossible thing. But the refusal could be made far less excusable if the feeling for beauty entered into our educational systems with anything like the fulness with which it entered into the educational systems of ancient Greece. Plato, you will remember, said that every time was big with living thought, and that the function of the philosopher was to assist this to its birth. Now, there are those who say that every youthful mind is big with the instinctive love of beauty, but that our schemes of education, which should assist it to its birth, do nothing of the sort. They discourage it, and repress it. Wherefore the reason why so many live the life without beauty is not that they deliberately refuse the proffered wealth, but that there are those who will not themselves go in thereat, nor suffer those who would. These things deserve our carefulest consideration.

Another great refusal is the refusal of the religious attitude in the presence of the universal order, beauty, and beneficence in whose midst our lives are set continually. It is not a refusal that is always made "from cowardice." Sometimes it is made from courage,—the courage to refuse to worship such a God as any that the creeds and churches have set up. There is more religion in such a refusal oftentimes than in the thing refused. If God is good, more pleasing in his eyes than Calvin's Institutes must be John Stuart Mill's heroic utterance which you know so well. But, whatever the theologians have written, here is an actual world of marvellous beauty, wonderful order, infinite grandeur, incalculable beneficence; and not to recognize and feel this beauty, order, grandeur, not to be glad and thankful for this great beneficence, is, or should be, impossible for any thoughtful, honorable man. Yet to so recognize and feel, to be so glad and thankful, is to be religious by a necessity which no man escapes; and so it is to lift one's heart to an ideal of perfect truth and holiness, and to trust that this

ideal is realized in the infinity of God. He that refuseth this, refuseth much.

All these are great refusals,—that which renounces the opportunity to do something for a political body which is very sick and sore, that which rejects the scientific contribution to our understanding of the universe, that which is dull to all the splendid and divine significance of literature and art, that spirit which can live in such a world as this, and not dare to be religious in despite of all the theologians' folly and the scorners' scorn. But all these are parts of a much greater whole,—a whole much greater than their sum. These are all great refusals. *The* great refusal is the refusal to respond to the invitation, the beseeching, of the complete and perfect world, to the necessities and the demands of social life, to the possibilities of our own God-given faculties. It is to live a narrow, selfish, sleek, and isolated life, thinking only of one's self or of one's own family and one's own affairs, when one might be a citizen of the universe, vitally and consciously related to the whole, "warming both hands before the fire of life," and going forth to earn one's living with a firm and joyous heart.

Nay, let us turn the thing about! Let us say *the* great refusal, the greatest possible, the noblest, and the best, is not that of the cowardly and slack. It is that of those who are "resolutely determined to live in the whole, the good, the true," who have forsworn all halfness, who have refused to take the good things of the earth and heaven, and not render back some service that shall justify them to themselves and to the order of the world.

It is the refusal to have the semblance, port, and carriage of a man, and not a manly will, a manly heart. It is the refusal to live on such an earth, under such stars, and not be worthy in some sort of the bounty round about us and the beauty over head. It is the refusal to enjoy the immemorial heritage of goodness, and not add to it as well as spend it with a lavish hand. Who of us is sufficient for these things? Truly, our sufficiency is of God; but that is not far

off and strange. It is in every wind that blows, in every tree that bends or waves in air. It is the joyous health of man and woman, youth and maid. It is the iron of our unconquerable wills. It is the passion of our beating hearts. So fortified by the eternal power without us and within, why should we not be strong enough to say to every base temptation that assaults our house of life, the citadel of our honor and our peace, "Get thee behind me, Satan! for thou savourest not of the eternal things"?

THREE SIMPLE THINGS.

“WHAT doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” As if anything could be easier! Three simple things! These only doth the Lord require. But when you come to think of these three things, and ask yourself how near you are to their accomplishment, how perfectly you have realized them in your habitual walk and conversation, you fall to wondering whether it is possible that that old Hebrew prophet was laughing grimly in his sleeve when he spoke of doing justly and loving mercy and walking humbly with one’s God, as if these things were as easy as to turn your hand,—as children say in play, “He can do little who can’t do this.” But, if you will stop a moment, and consider the connection in which Micah* used the language of our text, you will find that it was not the easiness, but the simplicity of his three things that he was enforcing on the hearts that failed three thousand years ago. And, truly, they were simple in comparison with other things that were believed to be divine requirements in his time,—the fasts and feasts, the sacrifices and oblations of the tiresome ritual which had already fairly entered on the course it was to run with ever more conspicuous absurdity for seven hundred years, until even the great Hillel, wisest and best of all the rabbis of the Jewish Church, could solemnly debate whether it was right to eat an egg laid on the Sabbath by a hen that had been provided merely to eat, not for the eggs that she would lay. And, if the great Hillel, from whose lips fell many a saying that would have added beauty to the words that Jesus spoke, could waste his strength in such absurdities, you may be sure that there were others of less virile mind who did a great deal worse.

* Or some other prophet. The last two chapters of *Micah* are probably a postscript by some other hand.

If the simplicity of the prophetic ideal was in such vivid contrast with the Judaism of a later time, it did not contrast less vividly with the Christianity which in the course of centuries supplanted the simplicity of earlier times. Yes, but Christianity was an advance on Judaism, some one may possibly object. It was an advance on the Judaism I have described, not upon that of Micah when he said, "I will show thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requires of thee,—to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." That is as good Christianity as if Jesus himself had spoken it; and, of all the miracles, no other is so strange as that Christianity, starting from the simplicity of Jesus, should have gone on to build up an ecclesiastical and dogmatic system so different from his ideals that, if the attempt had been to make the difference as great as possible, the success could not have been more wonderful.

To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. Nothing about any forms and ceremonies; nothing about baptism or the eucharist; nothing about penances or fasts; nothing about the Apostles' Creed, or the Nicene or Athanasian; nothing about the Confession of Augsburg or the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England or the thirty-three articles of the Westminster Confession; nothing about trinity or atonement or total depravity or election, or any of those things which have assumed so much importance in the history of the Christian Church. Is the religion which can formulate or tolerate these things the same that was so free of any such contamination as it welled up a stream of living water from the deep heart of Joseph's peasant son? We believe in evolution; but it seems as if there must have been a revolution here, bringing the worst things uppermost, and the best down to the ground. Yet there was not. There is a book of recent date—a living book, whose author is already dead*—which indicates with wonderful felicity and fidelity every step of the process by which Christianity, from being a religion of life in its great

* Dr. Edwin Hatch, Oxford University.

founder's faith and hope and love, became in the course of three centuries a religion of belief, consigning to eternal hell all who were not prepared to give unquestioning assent to theological propositions which no mortal man could understand.

The Christianity of Jesus was divinely simple in comparison with the stupendous system of ritual and dogma which has been foisted upon it, so burying it out of sight that many thousands have not known that such a thing once gladdened simple hearts. And it was an easy system in comparison with that which finally corrupted it so grossly that there was left hardly a semblance of its original self. And still, however simple in comparison with the dogma of Geneva and the ritual of Rome, and however easy in comparison with a belief that is outrageous to the intellect and a subjection that is intolerable to the will, in its application to the affairs of our habitual life the rule of the Hebrew prophet, which anticipated that of Jesus by seven hundred years, will not be found so simple and so easy every time that those who have in them a passion of heroism and endurance will lack for opportunity to manifest its god-like quality.

For see : to do justly. It is a matter of action and speech and thought. We are just or unjust in our deeds, our words, and in our thoughts. But it is the dullest sense which cannot see that this distinction is, for the most part, merely formal and superficial. Are not words also deeds? It was said of Luther's words that they were half-battles. There have been whole battles that have not counted for so much. Mr. Froude objected to Emerson's "Representative Men" that they were, with the exception of Napoleon, men of thought and speech, not men of action ; and, no doubt, the list could have been much prolonged. We might have had examples from the industrial and commercial world, the most characteristic world of modern times. But, surely, Mr. Froude would not contend that Plato and Shakspeare did not *do* as much as Watt or Stephenson. What men of action, as we call the explorers and inventors and great captains of

industry or war, have done more than such men of thought and speech as Burke and Chatham, Marshall and Hamilton, Sumner and Lincoln? Grant's soldier work was done long since; but the words he wrote, as with his ebbing blood, when the shadow of an awful death hung over him,—those words of loving kindness for the men whom he had overborne and crushed in battle's stern array,—are still going on their errands of good will, and shall not cease from doing so for many days to come. But this line of thought may lead us far astray. Enough that, even as proceeding from the humblest men, both words and thoughts have active energy. It is by no accident or blunder that the Greek word for poet, ποιητής, means a maker, a doer. The thought is parent of the word and deed. Keep thine heart with all diligence; for out of thine heart are the issues of life.

And so it is that doing justly has this threefold sphere — these intersecting circles, rather — of act, speech and thought. Happy the man who can do justly in all these! And here comes in that thought of the integrity of the individual, that inextricable relation of every part and faculty with every other, which is so often made of no account in the random utterances of the pulpit and the social company. The heart is set off against the head, and the head against the heart, and the conscience against the intellect, as if any one of these could act alone. They could — much as a man could act in a vacuum. Love is the greatest thing in the world,—yea, verily; though there is love (of which we must beware) which, of all selfish things, is selfishest. But, when the preacher goes on to say that love is everything, he might as well plead for a body without bones. Love without intellect, judgment, would be as flabby and gelatinous as that, and could as little go alone. So to do justly, it is not merely necessary that we have the disposition to do so, but it is also necessary that our minds be trained to see things as they are. This is why the School of Science seems to be a moral school, training its scholars to avoid those pitfalls into which the unwary politician, preacher, man of business, whose life is so much more emotional, has sometimes been known to fall.

There is a sphere of justice in which it is comparatively easy to see what is right. It is inclusive of all obligations that have been deliberately assumed. These must be met : the engagement must be kept, the bill must be paid, the contract must be carried out, the expectations we have raised must not be disappointed if we can otherwise effect. And in these humble things there is a school for others of much wider scope. Let a man act up to his acknowledged standard in all these, and he will grow the stuff to meet emergencies whether of temptation or of exceptional demand. These surprises of the business community which every now and then tempt us to think the pillared firmament is rottenness, and that the business world is built on stubble, are not often unprepared-for in the character of the individual. You will seldom find that he began with doing some considerable dishonesty ; but, on the contrary, that the first fault was a venial one, a mere irregularity,—perhaps a borrowing of that he fully intended to restore. The gunner tells us that the charge which bursts his gun is every charge, and not the last. So every act of injustice, be it ne’er so petty, disintegrates the moral substance of a man, and prepares the way for those explosions which scare whole communities ; and so every act of justice, be it ne’er so humble, fortifies the will, and makes it strong for the resistance of temptation and the doing of the highest things.

Justice of speech concerning others is a matter that is not far off and strange to the most ordinary lives. Are words not deeds ? Why, it were often better to fell a man with an axe or plunge a knife into his heart than to so much as whisper words that poison faith and joy. “ One little word shall fell him,” Luther sings of the impersonated Evil of the world. It often takes no more than that to fell a righteous man ; for, as it goes, it gathers dirt and weight. “ My judgment is just,” said Jesus, “ because I seek not mine own will,” — to me of all things that he said the best. But in *our* judgments of others, from which our justice or injustice springs, how often we cannot say that ! Our judgment is

unjust because we do seek our own will, and in our meanness or our jealousy we have willed that such or such a one shall be brought low. And so to the tittle-tattle of the parlor and the street, to the innuendo that slays a reputation between the buying of a dress and the purchase of the trimmings, we give ample heed, believing it because we wish to do so, because it jumps with our dislike. And yet I do not know but that the tragedy is even greater when the evil listening has no baser motive than the mere love of idle talk, and when the growth-in-going of the blighting tale has no baser motive than the instinctive disposition, natural to man as breath or sleep, to dress a story up and make it fine, and give it vinegar and spice.

That may be, and doubtless is, good ethical philosophy which contends that, if there were but one man in the world, there would be no morality, no place for it, because morality must have two or more persons, in order to get any standing room at all. But, seeing that there are thousands and millions in the world, we will not trouble ourselves much with this philosophy of what might have been; but we will note that a man has a very definite relation to himself,—it may be only because he is associated with others, but the fact remains. And a man must do justly with himself. He must turn about the golden rule, and do unto himself what he would do to others; not work himself to death; not demand of himself the impossible; not deal too sternly with himself, but forgive himself his trespasses as he forgives others theirs; not waste in vain compunction and regret the energy that might be spent in doing good, giving himself little treats and tips occasionally, as he would any other friend. For, in truth, there is no one else who does so much for us as we do for ourselves; and we ought not to be ungrateful, and do nothing in return. But, on the other hand, we must not gloze our faults, and must not spoil ourselves with self-indulgence, nor our appetite for healthy food with too much cake.

I should like to linger with this section of my theme, and name some of the ways in which a man can do more justly

with those thoughts which are the lakes that feed the streams of speech and action. There are men and there are books having in them the quality of justice, with whom and which we shall, if we are wise, draw near in earnest fashion; for not one of the zymotic diseases is so contagious as the justice of a man or book. It is true of justice, as of poetry and religion, that it has no enemy so powerful as the conventional opinion of the world; and one of the least conventional of books contains this little poem celebrating the office that a book may sometimes perform for those immersed in conventional opinion over head and ears:—

“He ate and drank the precious words,
His spirit grew robust;
He knew no more that he was poor,
Nor that his frame was dust.
He danced along the dingy days,
And this bequest of wings
Was but a book. What liberty
A loosened spirit brings!”

So, then, it would appear that, while the three simple things of ancient prophecy are very simple in comparison with the demands of ecclesiastical observance and dogmatic belief, both formerly and in the present time, they are not so simple as to merit our contempt, if anything could be; that even doing justly, when we come to examine it carefully, has as many facets as a diamond, and as many novel lights. And I should not be surprised if it turned out that the same is true of “loving mercy” and of “walking humbly with your God.” There is no more break or roughness in passing from the justice to the mercy than there is in crossing a parallel of latitude or longitude at sea. Indeed, it must have seemed to you already as if I had anticipated somewhat, and had been talking about mercy, when “doing justly” was avowedly my theme. Can we do justice without loving mercy? I doubt it very much. When in war times I took to rifle-shooting, hoping to dedicate my skill to freedom’s murderous defence, I was instructed that I ought

to aim a little higher than my mark if I would hit it ; and, though in following the advice I came very near to immolating a small curious boy who coincidently climbed the fence behind our target to see what was going on, I suppose that my instructions were correct, and that proper allowance must be always made in shooting for the tug of gravity upon the flying ball. And in our aim at justice is there not very apt to be a tug of selfishness upon our action or our speech, to correct which we should aim higher than justice,—aim at mercy, if haply justice may be better done that way ?

When Micah, the prophet, made “to love mercy” the second of his three simple things, it is evident that he meant that men should love it for themselves, and not merely in others or in any far-off way, and love it so that they must have it for their own. There is a way of loving mercy that does a man more harm than good. It is the way of those who take it out in loving ; who melt with sympathetic tenderness over the mercy shown in books to suffering and sinful folk, and who spend so much of their energy in this way that they have none remaining for the practical exigencies that present themselves from day to day. Nothing is surer than that the softest feelings which do not express themselves in action tend to hardening of the heart. Among those who are profoundly agitated by the social problems of the time, and who insist that what is wanted is not mercy, not kindness, but justice, there are not a few whom I would not exchange for an equal number of the dear old-fashioned alms-givers, giving on the right hand and the left without discrimination. For these brilliant theorists are often men who take it out in theory, and do not lift by so much as a finger’s weight the burden from the back of the poor soldier, who is stumbling on beside them in the ranks, ready to perish on the march. Or they are like Hawthorne’s Hollingsworth in the “Blithedale Romance,” mere theories incarnate, and in their devotion to their theories losing all human sympathy. I have known such, men with a passion for reform, and working for it day and night, and doing a great deal of good, no

doubt, but with as little vital sympathy for men and women as such as if they were so many stocks and stones, seeing in each but one more unit in the social problem. And I have thought, were I the object of such men's solicitude, I should want to say to them, "While justice halts, for God's sake,—nay, for *our* sakes, for we need each other,—pray you a little mercy, a little human kindness, a little cordial friendliness, such as one cannot give to a social unit or a problem, but only to a fellow-man." It is as possible to give our wisest social help as it was the old-time alms in that unsympathetic way which spoils the gift, if through the heart of it there does not run "that thread of all-sustaining beauty which runs through all, and doth all unite." Our finest theories of social justice and reform will come to naught unless they are inspired by love, and carry something of their inspiration into the personal contacts of the social helper with the men whom he would help.

To love mercy is a necessity, because to do justly is so hard; and the mercy comes in very happily to make up what the justice lacks. By thus leaning to the side of mercy we may do more than justice now and then to some one who is full of grievous wrong, but it is much better to err upon this side than on the other. Indeed, I am persuaded that, if a passion for mercy could be substituted for that sentiment of justice, and that demand for retribution, which now dominate the processes of criminal law and punishment, it would be much better for us all; the two great rational objects of criminal procedure—the improvement of the criminal and the safety of society—would be much better served than they are now. As with our criminal procedure, so with our political economy. It knows nothing of the individual. It knows nothing but demand and supply,—buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest. But a human world cannot be left entirely to such regulation. The manufacturer and merchant do not employ "labor" merely: they employ men and women of the most various abilities and needs and circumstances and exposures; and, as that is no

sufficient system of education which treats each child merely as an educational unit, and not as an individual child-soul, so that is no sufficient system of employment which does not treat those employed as individuals, and in times of great emergency leave its political economy "as Joseph his coat in the hands of the harlot," and break away into some act of vital human sympathy. The men who are equal to these things, who from the surplus of their wealth maintain the rate of wages on a falling market, put the dishonest clerk or faithless workman on his honor for another trial, see in each man or woman some one whose friend he ought to be and whose friendship he cannot forego, are doing more to solve the labor problem of our time than all the theorists. Some of you may think that this is pulpit talk, and will not bear examination in the fierce light that beats upon the counting-room and market-place; but some of you, I doubt not, have made trial of it, and found it equal to the stress of the event.

Can we do justice without loving mercy in our judgment of character and fault? It is not that we should "compound for sins we are inclined to by damning those we have no mind to," but that, without any partiality for our own faults, we should remember not merely the circumstances of other men's action, but also that their essential character comes into the account. Putting yourself in his place is not enough, for *he* is not another *you*; and so

"What's done we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted."

There is many a one who walks in conscious innocence or spiritual pride who, with his character unchanged if he had been subjected to another's stress of terrible temptation, might have succumbed, and who with that other's character might have dragged his garland in yet deeper mire.

To do justly and to love mercy. The second requisition is essential to the first. For as one * who has thought tenderly and deeply of these things has said, "For all the

* Rev. James Vila Blake.

things that press, push, strain, and crush humanity, the inherited tendencies, the keenness of temptation, repressed longings blazing out in sight of possible yet forbidden satisfaction, long years of ignorance both of life and of ourselves, and of slumber suddenly awakened by a flash of bewildering light too dazzling to see in,—these and other like things will not be judged justly unless we have the knowledge to go all around them as with a surveyor's chain, and the love to pitifully feel, while we are sheltered, the force of those blasts from life's poles on the unsheltered and exposed." Of the knowledge requisite for thinking and thereafter acting justly in these things, who of us can have enough? What we lack in knowledge, therefore, we must make up in love, in mercy of that quality unstrained of which great Shakspeare said:—

"It droppeth as the gentle dew from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes;
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown.
It is an attribute of God himself,
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice."

"What doth the Lord require of thee but that thou should'st do justly, and love mercy, and"—one other thing—"walk humbly with thy God?" And here again there has been some anticipation. As I could not speak aright of justice without implying mercy, as we cannot do justice without being merciful to the weak and overborne, so I could not speak of mercy without implying something of humility; so we cannot be merciful without walking humbly with our fellow-men,—I meant to say our God, but it is just as well; for to walk humbly with our fellow-men is to walk humbly with our God. As nothing is more unlovely than an avowed humility, often the transparent mark of spiritual pride, so nothing is more lovely than a genuine humility, that of the man who "still suspects, and still reveres himself in lowli-

ness of heart." "Considering thyself lest thou also be tempted," — there is no fount of mercy which has a steadier and more healing flow than the humility which takes this lesson well to heart. There is, as I have said, another in the consideration of our difference from our fellow-men,— our perception that, where we are strong and guarded, they may be weak and without armor or defence. But this perception which so often generates spiritual pride, if rightly apprehended, is another summons to humility; for it is not as if our faculties were of our own making, our gifts of our own giving, our circumstances of our own contriving. "Not unto us, O Lord," the best endowed must say, facing the fundamental tragedy of life: that you are you, and I am I; that to one is given five talents, to another two, and to another one. Should those be humblest who have only one? Nay, rather those who have the five which not their worth has bought, and which they have not increased, as easily they might have done. "I have had great powers, and have only half used them," said Theodore Parker, as he lay dying in the flower of cities by the Arno's side. What noble self-respect! What grand humility! But if he who worked as few men ever worked, to whose "passionate patience" and fidelity and consecration there were no bounds, could so judge and so accuse himself, how should not the rest of us, who, without a hundredth part of his ability, have not shown a thousandth part of his fidelity?

"Spirits are not finely touched
But to fine issues; and Nature never lends
The smallest scruple of her excellence
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor,—
Both thanks and use."

Ay, and humility. Do I presume to better Shakspeare, then? Nay; for the humility is in the thanks and use, as sure as sunshine in the summer or as sweetness in the rose.

All walking humbly with our fellow-men is walking humbly

with our God ; but walking humbly with our God is more than walking humbly with our fellow-men. In other words, religion is more than ethics, more than morality : it is morality and worship, the upward look of wonder, reverence, awe, and praise. But there is ethics even in our walk with God,—ethics of the intellect. For we walk humbly with our God when in intellectual ways we are not too presumptuous in our fancied knowledge of eternal things. Theology in past times cannot be suspected of having walked humbly with its God. It has talked of him in Matthew Arnold's long familiar phrase, "as if he were a man on the next street." It has sounded him with its plummet ; it has stretched its line upon him ; and what it does not know of him (it thinks) is not worth knowing. And I do not hesitate to say that there is an agnosticism in our time which, as compared with such theology, is worshipful, is religious. It is the agnosticism of humility, the agnosticism which bows its head in silence in the presence of an Awful Mystery, something too vast for definite thought or speech. But there is an agnosticism which has in it no humility. It is prouder of its ignorance than was ever theologian of his knowledge. It is more knowing, too ; for it knows that nothing can be known of that of which we must know something if we know anything, seeing that nothing is which is not a related portion of the whole. That is at once the true agnosticism and the true religion which counts itself not to have comprehended ; only to have apprehended something of the infinite fulness of God ; which, reverently glad for all the wealth of Science, says, as its eye takes in the splendor of her discovered facts and laws, "Lo ! these are parts of his ways ; but how little is yet known of him !" How little, yet how much ! Enough for joy and rapture, love and praise, and summons to the highest and the noblest things. Enough to say to us, as from the world's great Heart, "I will show thee, O man, what is good, and that what the Eternal Power requires of thee is to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

THE SUMMER'S PARABLE.

My subject is "The Summer's Parable." But you will say, "Which one?" For it has had several parables. One of them was the great *unsuccessful* railroad strike in Chicago and elsewhere,—a parable of personal liberty and social rights; and another was the great *successful* strike in Washington of what the President has called a conspiracy of pelf,—the parable of a great party balked of its rightful victory by the strikers of a great privileged monopoly. But these things came to me where I was "summering high upon the hills of God" as from another world, so foreign were they to our peace and quietness. *My* summer's parable shall be a parable of my *own* summer, and of that long and bitter drouth, which was not so much its most striking and aggressive feature as it was its body and its soul, the all-engrossing circumstance. Week after week, month after month, went by, and still the needed blessing was withheld. The roads were turned to dust, and then worn out, as if our wheels cut through the alluvial softness to the rocky framework of the world. The lawns were browned until it seemed they could no more be green. Even the clouds that freshened neighboring villages to north and south either refused to climb our loftier heights or only trailed their fringes over them. Our hill-top seemed a pivot upon which the showers went round. If now and then there came a few sad drops or a sharp dash from some portentous cloud, 'twas more a mockery of hope than the fulfilment of desire. Then came the days when even our neighbors fared as ill as we. "Shining on, shining on, by no shadow made tender," the rainless days went by, with dewless nights between.

Time and again the day of our deliverance appeared to be at hand, and yet it did not come.

"We knew it would rain ; for all the morn
A spirit on slender ropes of mist
Was lowering his golden buckets down
Into the vapory amethyst
Of marshes and swamps and dismal fens,
Scooping the dew from out of the flowers,
Dipping the jewels out of the sea,
To sprinkle them over the land in showers."

And still it did not rain. The poplars might show the white of their leaves never so daintily, the amber grain might shrink in the wind never so ominously, these signs, like all the others, failed in the dryness of the time. My genial neighbor, with whose prophetic soul I always had conferred with perfect confidence when I would know what weather to expect, could only say, "There's no telling what it's going to do." The morning and the evening hours took fog and smoke for warp and woof ; and on their loom of space they wove a web—a curtain—that shut out the woods, the hills, the moon, the stars—well-nigh the sun, that glowed, day after day, a crimson disk, a lidless eye that glared upon the evil it had wrought with pitiless disdain. But there were other aspects of the situation that were much more impressive to the practically-minded than any so far named. Where the tender rowen should have grown abundantly, the harsh and hopeless stubble held the field. The gardens were dried up before their time ; the thirstier crops shrivelled for lack of their habitual freshening. And then for man and beast there came the fear and terror of a water famine on the land. Well after well gave out, till only one of all within the village neighborhood withstood the drouth and the increased demand. That one, as time went on, came to have for me the character of a living personality, a generous and faithful friend ; and as the flying windlass sped the iron-bound bucket down into the cool shadowed depth, and brought it up again dripping with diamond drops, and

filled with that delicious drink which not even the connoisseur in vintages dare put below his best, I had for the good well such honor and respect as for a man found stanch and strong, firm and immovable, in a slack and baleful time. Another object calling for like reverence was "the cold spring," as we fitly call it, half a mile up north, besieged by farmer folk with casks to fill for household uses, and by horses and cattle driven from near and far to relish the unfailing fountain of sweet waters. Shall we ever drink of it again without drinking to the blessed memory of the days when it was such a help to our distress? I should like to think that we should not; but I know how short our human memories are, and how quickly our abundance breeds oblivion of help and comfort and the friends that gave them in our times of sorest need.

Well, the drouth came to an end not many days ago. It was bound to soon or late. The ancient mother sometimes gives her earth-born children a sharp reminder of their dependence on her bounty and their habitual ingratitude; but she does not always chide, neither does she withhold her gifts from us forever. For she knoweth our frame. And you know how it is when you come home to some beloved friend, or some beloved friend comes home to you from over seas or far away, after long separation. How will it be in that first day, first hour, first moment, of her meeting you? You wonder much; and, when she comes, it is not very strange. There is a momentary rapture,—the first kiss, the first gathering heart to heart; and then the only wonder is that it does not seem more wonderful, and you find yourself almost resenting the ease and haste with which the former habitudes resume their wonted sway, so that only by an effort can you make it seem that there has been any time of separation. And so it was with us when the rain came again after the long drouth. Was ever organ mellower than the thunder, was ever music sweeter than the volleying rush and rattle of the rain! But, then, how natural it seemed! We thought we had forgotten utterly the manner of the

blessed mystery ; and straightway it seemed as if there had been no drouth at all, and nothing so absurd as that we should have doubted whether it would all come right,—ay, perhaps, whether it could ever rain again. Could rain! Well, there didn't seem to be much doubt of it. How the great clouds piled up the western sky, and with what joyous energy they flung their hoarded treasure on the roads, the fields, the trees, that seemed to revel in the conscious joy of their renewal of a rapture that they had not known for many a weary day! And, when we came to think of it, the drouth had not been so very dreadful, after all. It was just wonderful how the trees had held their green, so that along our roads that were the most embowered, coming upon them suddenly, a stranger never would have guessed that there was any drouth ; and all the roadsides were “one laugh of color and embellishment.” And what was it that the golden-rods were saying? “Well, now for once we have exactly what we like.” It is true that on the mountain ledges, where the soil was thin, the maples here and there anticipated the full autumn splendor ; but that was so much clear gain for those of us who could not tarry till the regular time for it had come. There were many prophecies that the winter corn would come to naught ; but in the event it merely ripened a month earlier than usual, and not much less abundantly. And this reminded me how many prophecies of failing crops we have almost every summer. If half of them came true, there would be a famine every year. But, somehow, the harvest does not fail. There is more some years than others ; but, at the worst, there is enough and to spare ; for all the enormous waste, which is one of the saddest features of our agricultural life. Truly, the lack of water was severe. The Westfield looked less like a river than like a Brooklyn street of the old boulder pavement kind which here and there survives. But, if the shallower springs gave out, the deeper ones did not. When things were at the worst, upon some pleasant drive we found one and another fountain overflowing, as if there had never been

a moment's lack. And not only so but within earshot of the village street springs famous in some former generation, but to the younger people all unknown, renewed their fame, and yielded water of such coldness and such clarity that never

“brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God”

had better claim to be considered perfect and divine.

Have I seemed to you to say a thing, and then unsay it? But I have not done exactly that. And in the things that remained, despite the inexorable drouth, I have imagined that we have a sign and token of the things that remain to us in this or that range of our experience, personal or social, in despite of some almost intolerable stress of adverse circumstance, some drouth of health or love or vision, turning the pleasant landscape of our wonted joy to something dry as summer's dust and brown as rainless fields. My summer's parable shall be for me a parable of life's reserves of opportunity and strength and joy,—where most is taken, showing how much still abides; that their necessity is for stout hearts the hazel wand of witchery which reveals forgotten springs and those before unknown, whence they may draw at will refreshment for the parched and withered time. My summer's parable shall be for me and you a parable of the unfailing bounty of the world, the adequacy of humanity to the strain of the most hostile circumstances that give it momentary pause. And my trouble will not be to find illustrations of my doctrine sufficiently numerous and various, but out of the many that will crowd upon me to select such as are most suggestive, such as will appeal most vividly to your own personal experience; for the preacher is but dumb until his voice awaken some responsive echo in his hearers' minds and hearts.

“He that endureth to the end shall be saved,” says the New Testament. Lowell takes up the cry, and sings,—

“Endurance is the crowning quality,
And patience all the passion of great hearts.”

But it is no passive endurance that deserves this lofty praise. Let patience have her perfect work. Of endurance, patience of the passive sort, we have a deal too much. We have what thinks itself submission to the will of God, when it is only base surrender to the vanguard of a foe which we might valiantly oppose and drive before us, like the chaff the thresher purges from his floor. We must submit to the inevitable. Yes, but the inevitable is always something *less the resistance of a manly man*. In Browning's splendid song of those who clung to their first fault and perished in their pride, who set up their gods upon a barren rock when the isles they sought were close at hand, "like cloudlets faint at evening sleeping," is a truth which finds innumerable illustrations in the lives and deeds and failures of innumerable men. How many lamentable failures that might have been proud successes for the youth, the man, the artist, the inventor, the poet, the statesman, the man of business and affairs, had not the toiler been so much in haste to give over the unpromising task! There is a theological doctrine called "the perseverance of the saints," and Brooke Herford has rung a noble change on it in a sermon called "The Perseverance of Sinners." It celebrates the perseverance of the men who make a manful struggle with the constitutional temptations of their lives. Why not another celebrating the heroic stuff of those who, once their line is taken, propose to fight the battle out thereon if it takes all summer, and all winter, too,—ay, several winters and summers? But a man may make his false starts as well as a horse upon the track. My reading of biography convinces me that many, a majority, of the most successful men have failed in one direction, if not in two or three, before striking into the right path.

"How far to Taunton?" asked the traveller, and got for answer, "Well, if you keep right on as you are going now, it's about 25,000 miles; but, if you turn sharp around, it's not above a mile." Now there are men who are as far as that from any liberal success, if they go right on as they are going,

and as near to it as that, if they turn right square about. It is the doctrine of Weismann that not even genius has any predetermination to particular things. And, if it be so with genius, it must be much more so with the average talent of mankind. There is a good deal of egotism and vanity in the persuasion of men of average ability that they were born to do one thing, and one only. Than Fourier's maxim—"The attractions are proportioned to the destinies"—there was never greater nonsense preached within the range of practical affairs. The attractions are frequently for the things easiest to do, the pleasantest. The destinies await the stress and strain of uncongenial toil. Our social world is strown as thick with failures as a battlefield with the dead and dying, many of which might have been as conspicuous successes if the man or woman had had heart of grace to say, "If I can't do what I would, then I will do what I must." We knew not the resources of our neighborhood, until the failing springs compelled us to look about us for some fresh supply. And often men do not know, do not begin to know, the resources of their own ability until by some stress of baleful circumstance they are compelled to look about them very sharply for some fresh supply of intellectual force or practical inventiveness or righteous will. I like the temper of the men who, when the drouth was sorest, said, "Now is the time to dig a well that will not fail"; and down they went, though nearly all the way 'twas through the solid rock, until the crystal answer came in answer to their operative prayer. I like the men who, in the drouth and famine of their practical and moral lives, sink deeper wells into their own natures, and from that hereditary soil compel the blessing that withholds itself forever from the slack and feeble hand.

The tendency of our modern life is to exaggerate the value and significance of the outward circumstance, and to depreciate the value and significance of the creative and informing soul of man.

"Things are in the saddle, and ride mankind."

But one must have been very careless in his observation not to be aware that the best part of life does not inhere in our inventions and conveniences. We see people who have all of these at their command, everything that money can procure ; and what is their life sometimes compared with that of people who have none or few of their material advantages, but who have order, neatness, and frugality, a soul for beauty, the love of books and music, or some other art? In no respect has the socialistic agitation of the time been sillier than in its envious attitude toward the men who have heaped up colossal fortunes. These are about as little to be envied as any people in the world. Of course there are different attractions for different men ; but, for myself, the most enviable people are those who, "having *little*, yet have all." Luxury is sickening and vulgar in comparison with the quiet, inexpensive habits of the people who have to struggle for a living, but who know how to spend what they have got judiciously. Hundreds, so spent, are often more enticing than tens of thousands spent, as these often are, in tasteless splendor, which no true artist ever cared to paint either for still life or for the background of some human loveliness. How we do hug ourselves over the machine-made things of modern life, as if they had in them the secrets of happiness and success ! But I do not find they bring us more imagination, beauty, love, or any of the realities that make life worth living. When I find the farmers taking down their dear old Virginia fences and putting the barbed wire abomination in their place, I seem to find in little, if not all the sphere of modern improvement, a good deal of it reflected as in a mirror. Celia Thaxter, that happy, radiant creature who made the Isles of Shoals her empire and her throne, will always stand in my imagination as representative of what "narrow circumstances" may be to a liberal soul. The Isles of Shoals ! What are they, obviously, but

"A heap of bare and splintery crags
Tossed about by lightning and frost,
With rifts and chasms and storm-bleached jags
That wait and growl for a ship to be lost ?"

But how much more than this they were to her, and then through her for us, through her superior penetration, her joy in simple things, such that no flower of the spring passed by her, nor any other changing aspect of the sea or shore! There are those who journey round the world in eighty days or more, and do not see so much as she saw in those rocky derelicts that lie aground off the New Hampshire coast. There are those who never, though they are always wandering, see as much as she saw in that narrow space amidst "the beating of the steely sea," or drink so pure a joy.

However it may be with broken fortunes, losses of material things, however fit and noble it may be, when such a drouth is on, to search for the unfailing springs, to go down deeper into ourselves and into our environment for their reserves of power and use, there are those, I know, who do not think that this philosophy applies to those experiences of deeper loss which soon or late must come to all, albeit with significance as various as our individuality and the circumstances of our life and love. To try, when such things come, to find some task, some interest, some service, some enthusiasm, to fill, or partly fill, the void which death has made, seems a disloyalty to love and sorrow. But the disloyalty is greater, to my thinking, that so little trusts the greatness of the loss, the vastness of the sorrow, that it fears to plunge it in oblivion in any stream of pure and simple joy, in any mountain brook or ocean wave, in any honest task, or any noble service of mankind. Thank Heaven, there are those who do not read the lesson sorrow sets them in this backward way,—mourners who, if they did, would always live in darkness, and trail a cloud of gloom along with them, enveloping their friends and neighbors in its gloomy folds, but who, as it is, are "cup-bearers undying of the wine that's meant for souls," who carry light with them, and peace and joy, wherever they may go. Think not that they forget. No, no! But their loss and sorrow, which, kept in frigid isolation, would become a marred and stunted thing, bearing no fruit of spiritual strength and peace, set in the

wide space of life's boundless opportunity, freshened by breezes from the mountain heights of good endeavor, warmed by the sunlight flowing from all bright and lovely things, will take on a grace and beauty such as no tree that grows in field or forest ever knew, and yield a fruit sound through the wintry days, and good to stay the hunger of the souls that starve for better bread than can be made with wheat.

When I think of the long weeks of drouth and of the springs that did not fail us in that weary time, I am reminded, also, of our times of individual lack, when one after another of the sources of our peace, our joy, our inspiration, fail, work that we have rejoiced in turns to weariness, friends that we have trusted prove unkind, our intellectual satisfactions pall. But there are some things that do not pall. The current literature may run filth or lava, or, when it is as pure as mountain brooks, still fail somehow to satisfy our thirst; but always, in the last resort, we have the good old books, forever clear and cool, forever sweet and good, going down, like the artesian wells, into the world's deep heart, and sending up a Scott's, a Milton's, or a Shakspeare's force and stream. How much of our contemporary reading is like drinking surface water which has gathered various dirt and contracted various impurities, when we might drink of fountains of pure genius without let or fear! As with the intellectual satisfactions, so with those of the affectionate and loving heart. There are voluble affections, demonstrative attachments, that show any drouth of fortune or repute as quickly as that spot upon your lawn, where the soil thinly veneers the underlying rock, shows the first lack of rain. But there are others very different from these,—the friends in need who are friends indeed, who make their arms as bars of iron for us to lean upon in our distress; and sometimes we could thank God for the Ithuriel spear of painful circumstances which reveals to us the God-like quality of these, and lets us know how worthless are the rest. But a man's work is, after all is said, his best anchor, his best resource. What shall he do when that turns stale and wear-

some to him? Perhaps try to do it better, and see what will come of that. Perhaps carry it down, as men do a failing well, till it shall find some deeper spring, ally itself with some ideal interpretation of the world, so that it shall be seen not as some miserable task-work bringing so much bread or coin, but as a man's part of the whole world's work, the payment of a debt to nature and to God for their unstinted bounty,—

“Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.”

And when I think of the long weeks of drouth, and then of the last country days, the streams refilled, the lawns rallying so quickly, and sure to be as green as June with the October days; and of that last night when, with a book as fresh as falling rain, I sat before the radiant fireplace, and hour after hour heard the sharp, steady pour upon the roof and pane; and of the next morning when, homeward bound, we drove and rode past ponds and lakes innumerable, for which you would seek in vain on the surveyor's map,—when I think of these things, my summer's parable fills me with hope and cheer for the whole intellectual and moral life of our humanity. I hear men lamenting the deficiencies of our present intellectual state. It is critical, they tell us, not creative. And what aching voids in literature, where Browning, Tennyson, Lowell, Emerson, Thackeray, Hawthorne, and George Eliot once filled their several places with the fulness of immortal things! Like voids are shown to us in music and in painting, aching for the loss of Beethoven and Wagner, Corot and Millet, Inness and Daubigny and Rousseau. What shall we say in answer to these pitiful complaints? Say that genius has its times of ebb and flow as surely as the tides that rise and fall on the Atlantic coast. Say that until now there has only been one Homer, one Dante, and one Shakspeare in the world. Not every common bush afire with God bears such as these. But say also that there was a time when some whom we consider great in art were not so thought about. Browning with difficulty could find a volume of

Shelley's poems years after Shelley's death. Browning's own publisher in 1860, or thereabout, could not report a single volume of his poems sold since the last squaring of accounts. Then, too, although we dare not name the names of the successors of the "great ones gone," sometimes we read a poem by a young poet of our time, and we say, "This is as good as anything that Tennyson or Emerson or Browning did in his poetical minority." It may be the beginning of a great career, and it may be the beginning of the end. But, however it may be with these, the stock of genius will not fail. We shall have new poets, painters, sculptors, architects, musical composers. We may not recognize them when they appear, but they will surely come. And, for myself, I am as sure as if he were already here that some time we shall have a poet greater than Shakspeare or Dante or Homer, in whom all our new science shall be fluid stuff, and then be by him recast in the forms of his own mind. And one of the reasons why I hope for immortality and believe in it is that it will assure to us the privilege of rejoicing in that poet when he comes, though it should not be for fifty thousand years.

As with literature and the other forms of art, so with the industrial and social problems of the time my summer's parable is one of lofty cheer. I would not underrate the dangers and anxieties that press upon our social heart. They are many; they are great. The combinations of labor and the combinations of capital are equally threatening to our industrial health and peace. And those deliberately and these unconsciously, but inevitably, seem to be working toward a more socialistic arrangement. From such an arrangement many expect only the most dreadful things. And I congratulate myself that I shall be dead and gone before the new order, the new tyranny, is well under way. It has no beauty that I should desire it. But over the entrance to the new era I see no such inscription as that which Dante saw over the gate of hell,— "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." This hope at least is there,—that, if mankind

does not like the socialistic arrangement, it can give it up. This, also,—that its disgust with the arrangement will work a speedy change, reaction, and renewal of individual liberties. The cure for socialism is — socialism. The principle is the same as with the Keeley gold-cure of intemperance. But socialism in everything will be far more disgusting and revolting than alcohol in everything is to the dipsomaniac. As it is with socialism, so is it with this, that, or the other social or political nostrum that is being cried up in our time. At the worst, we shall try them all ; and, if they kill us individually, they will not kill us socially. We shall find out that they are not what they are cried up to be, and we shall cry them down.

As with the social aspect, so with the religious. Here, too, we have no end of doleful prophecies. What we can clearly see is the disintegration of the popular theology, and simultaneously a fungoid growth of fanciful opinions in comparison with which the old supernaturalist orthodoxy is rational, respectable, and sane. But it is not as if there had not been many similar developments in the world's religious history.

“ They have their day, and cease to be.”

The disintegration of the popular religion does not import the failure of religion in the world ; and the rank growth of speculative vagaries does not import that these will choke the life of simpler, better things beyond all hope of their renewal.

“ I think man's soul dwells nearer to the East,
Nearer to morning's fountains than the sun ;
Herself the source whence all tradition sprung ;
Herself at once both labyrinth and clew.
The miracle fades out of history ;
But love and wonder and the primal earth
Are born into the world with every child.”

Given man confronted by the wonder and the mystery of the world, the deeper mystery of his own life, and it is as cer-

tain that his heart will always be religious as that he will eat when he is hungry, and sleep when he is tired, and love when he is young or old.

But industry and art and song and literature and religion are all so many different aspects of the one Life, which is Humanity. My summer parable shall teach me this, then, above all: that this Great Life is adequate unto itself, let come what will. It is not less than that great life of nature with which it is so intimately bound. For it also there have been, and there may be again, times of fierce drouth, wherein all the familiar springs of peace and joy and consolation have seemed to be, will seem to be, as dry as summer's dust. But, as even now the thirsty earth drinks in abundantly the hoarded treasure of the rain, so shall it be with the Great Life of man,—sore drouth and then divinest freshening; and, through drouth and freshening, the perpetual yearning for some higher good, the cumulative realization of some larger hope. How do I know these things?

Only as I know

“That man still rises level with the height
Of noblest opportunities, or makes
Such if the time supply not.”

And, knowing this, my mind is thronged with shining auguries,—

“Circle on circle, bright as seraphim
With golden trumpets, silent, that await
The signal to blow news of good to men.”

A GLORIOUS CHURCH.

SINCE our last meeting here I have been to Concord, Mass., to take part in the funeral services of Dr. Reynolds, the Secretary of our Unitarian Association for the last twelve years. The occasion was both simple and impressive. A lowering sky softened the light in the old parish meeting-house, the frame of which dates from 1712, its timbers wearing in their grain the memory of the Revolutionary Congress which met there in 1774, and Henry Thoreau's vindication of John Brown in 1859, and many a golden word of Emerson and other seers and prophets who have contributed to a great intellectual and moral history. There was a large gathering of our Unitarian ministers and laymen, and, with these, of the people of the parish and the town; for Dr. Reynolds did not more distinguish himself as the minister of the parish than as a citizen of the town, devoted to its great tradition and its present honor and renown. My relations with Dr. Reynolds long since transcended those of respect for an efficient officer and faithful service of our Unitarian body. I had for him a very great affection, which I have reason to believe he cordially reciprocated. These relations were established long before I became a director of the Unitarian Association; but I could not meet him, as I did at successive meetings of the board, and see how just and firm, how patient and how kind he was in his official relations, without an increased respect and admiration for his character. He was a providential man in the sense that he was admirably fitted for the place he filled. With plenty of hard business faculty he united a gift of clear and forcible expression, which, under the stress of his enthusiasm or anxiety for the cause he served, often

attained unto a lofty eloquence that shamed our recreant disposition, and sent us home resolved to do something more than we had done to strengthen his hands and encourage his devoted heart. Moreover, it was wonderful to see how he grew under the burden, not only in the technical ability required by the exacting duties of his office, but in that spiritual height and breadth which are apt to suffer from the exigencies of an official trust. The period of his incumbency coincided with some of the most troublous times in our denominational history; and, though his interpretations sometimes seemed to me unfortunate, I know that they were always dictated by the most conscientious motives and the most liberal spirit. And few, if any, have done more to prepare the soil out of which sprang and flowered the happiness and peace of our recent Conference at Saratoga than did he. It was most pitiful, most tragical, that he should fall upon the threshold of the promised land towards which he had yearned in many a desert hour. I cherish the assurance that some gleam of it found entrance to his brain and heart, and made yet more indefinite the boundary line twixt earth and heaven. But I wish he could have lived to taste the sweetness of our truce of God for many a happy year. His place will be a difficult one to fill: but he would have been the first to tell us how much greater is the cause he served than any individual, however useful, however honored or revered. We can best show our gratitude for his fidelity by entering freely into his spirit and carrying on his work to those large issues which it always had for his imagination and his hope.

As if to lay a flower upon his grave, I have taken for the subject of my sermon one which allured his thought, and which he presented to many of our churches as he went about among them on his errands of good will to God and man. I do not know, for certain, that he ever preached the sermon here; and I have not the least idea what the subject represented to his mind, so that I shall be obliged to treat it in my own way. The verbal collocation is in Ephesians:

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, that he might present to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” Now, if by a glorious church be meant one with a glorious history, a stupendous organization, one whose pontiffs had held nations in their hands, and had set their feet on kings, there would be no question that the Roman Catholic Church would answer to the description better than any other that the world has ever known. It certainly is not so old as its adherents like to think. It gradually emerged from the conflicts of the early centuries, the resultant of contending forces, the preservation of the fittest, in the narrowest Darwinian sense; *i.e.*, the ablest to survive. The pun which Jesus made when Peter hailed him as the Messiah loses much of its force in the King James and the revised translation: “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church,” etc. Peter’s name, Petras, meant rock; and what Jesus said was, “Thou art named Rock, and upon this Rock I will build my church,” etc. But his meaning evidently was that he would build his church upon the confession which Peter had just made: “Thou art the Messiah.” It is more than doubtful if Peter ever found his way to Rome; and that he was the first bishop of the Roman see is an ecclesiastical fiction of no more validity than the story of Saint Veronica’s handkerchief, which Father Conaty naïvely referred to at Saratoga as a well-known fact, — how she wiped with it the bleeding face of Jesus, and transferred to it *a true image*, as her name, Veronica, means. Then, too, it would be a very bold apologist for the Roman Church who should pretend that she had “neither spot nor wrinkle nor any such thing.” How about the bogus constitutions and the forged decretals? How about such monsters of iniquity as the popes Alexander VI. and John XXII.? Of all Cardinal Newman’s paradoxes, the most daring is identical with that of the German monk, a contemporary of Luther, who argued that the Roman Church must have been divinely sustained to have survived the corruptions which she nour-

ished in her bosom. The pen of Martineau has touched some of these corruptions as with an Ithuriel spear. He writes, "The orgies of the palace, the assassinations of the street, the swarm of flourishing informers, the sale of justice, of divorce, of spiritual offices and honors, turned the holy seat into an asylum of concupiscence and passion, and startled men into the belief that antichrist had come." But, when all these abatements have been made, and many others of like nature, it is not strange that so many are captivated and enthralled by the spectacle of a church sweeping into her array so many nations, so many centuries, with councils of such splendor, cathedrals of such vast, mysterious gloom, doctors of so much learning, saints of such tender heart, martyrs of such good confession, the comforter of so many millions with its liturgies and sacraments and prayers. And yet the glorious church of the New Testament writer could not have been any such church as this. In his day this history had not been made, these centuries were yet to be, these councils were an unimagined thing, the dogmas had not been developed, the liturgies were all amorphous in the womb of time. I do not for a moment mean to make the ideas of the New Testament the standard of what a glorious church should be. I only mean to indicate that one can have the dream and vision of a glorious church without any of the Roman attributes of historical and ritual splendor, without any of the breadth and vigor of the Roman sway.

Another glorious church is that of England; but its glory is essentially that of the Roman Church, — the same in kind, but very different in degree. For the Roman claim of nineteen centuries of historical development, for its actual course of fifteen centuries from the majestic Leo until now, the English Church has a special history of less than four hundred years; and for Rome's apostolic founder, most apocryphal, she can only boast King Henry VIII., most polygamic and most sanguinary in his marital career. Of her old cathedrals of which she is so proud, every one except St.

Paul's and the modern Truro was built — some of them centuries — before her beginning of years. She has been the ally of everything arbitrary in politics and retrograde in thought and life. And yet again I do not wonder at the responsive echoes which *her* voice awakens in the hearts of many worshippers. They do not acknowledge any break in their development. They date from the arrival of Saint Austin on the Kentish coast or from the Celtic Christianity which lay centuries back of that. A few years ago we celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of our particular church. But there are churches in America that date back nearly three centuries. That is pretty good; but what did Senator Hoar tell us about a notice that he saw over there somewhere stuck up in the church porch? It was to the effect that the next Tuesday or Wednesday the church would celebrate the one thousand and ninth anniversary of its foundation, as if that were a very little thing. Even the church buildings, many of them, have an equal date with Magna Charta or the wars of York and Lancaster. If Emerson could sing

“We love the venerable house
Our fathers built to God”

of a New England meeting-house, with what deeper feeling might he not have sung it of an old England parish church, kissed by the suns, worn by the winds and frosts and rains of centuries,—three, four, five, six, seven,—entwined with ivies and embowered with yews almost as old as its own sturdy walls and tower! Yet to these outward things the English Church has added many rare and noble spiritual gifts and graces. She has had her Chillingworth and Hooker, her Latimer and Ridley, her Butler and her Arnold, her Herbert and her Keble, and what women of high-hearted earnestness and tenderness of which any church might well be proud. So, then, whatever deductions we may make from the pretensions of the English Church, that she is indeed a glorious church there can be, I think, no doubt.

But, as one star differeth from another star in glory, so one church differeth from another church. There is one glory of the Roman Catholic, and another of the Greek or Anglican, and another of the church of Calvin, with its Presbyterian and Congregationalist branches. There is something glorious for many people in the dogmatic energy and coherency of this Genevan church, in the courage with which Calvin and Edwards pushed their system to its logical conclusions, no matter what of human hope and love and pity, no matter what of reverence for and trust in God, it ground beneath its Juggernautish wheels. I find the glory rather in the fashion with which those who honestly believed these things of God and man went on trusting in God as if he were all love and tenderness, working for man as if he were not doomed from all eternity to everlasting bliss or bane. Moreover, the church of Calvin has been the church of political liberty, the church of the United Netherlands, of John Robinson of Leyden and his Pilgrim band, of the New England Congregational churches, of Cromwell and his Ironsides Independents, breaking the neck of an arrogant ecclesiasticism and a foolish king. And so I might go on and speak of other churches: of the Baptist, surely glorious with its advocacy of "soul liberty," the absolute detachment of the Church and State, and with its protest against baptism as a magical formula whereby the curse of man's inherited depravity is forever taken away; of the Methodist, surely glorious in its appeal from Calvin's sovereign decrees, and in its expansive energy, recruiting into the ranks of its ministry more than a thousand preachers every year, and building every year as many new churches as it makes new ministers. But, if I continue on this line much longer, I shall have no time to develop my idea of a glorious church which is not such as these which I have named; which has no such proud, imperial history as that of Rome; no such cathedral gloom and glory, however gotten, as the Church of England; no such dogmatic symmetry as the church of Calvin; no such political associations as those with Holland's dikes

and with the "Mayflower's" crew,—like to so many stamens and pistils of that rugged blossom sowing the New England shore; no such long course as the Baptists of devotion to a principle "fit to be law universal"; no such expansive energy as that of the Methodist body, its little one becoming a thousand, and its small one a great people in a century, or but little more, of its transplanted life. The New Testament writer had the idea of a glorious church in which none of all these notes inhered. I do not, as I have said already, make his standard absolute. But it suggests that there may be a glorious church without the age-long history or the territorial extent of these churches, or without the other attributes that have made one or another of them glorious in the eyes of many loyal and true-hearted men and women.

Thus, for example, a church, however small in numbers, and however brief its history, however simple its worship, and however plain the house in which that worship rises on the wings of song and prayer, may be a glorious church if it abounds with glorious thoughts of God and man, and life and death and the hereafter, with glorious ideas of duty as man's gratefulness for all the bounty of the natural and social world, with glorious memories of saints and heroes, not only those in its own special line, but those of world-wide fame. I do not speak now of the individual church, but one such here or there may illustrate my thought. Thus the church of David Swing, housed in a theatre or in a barn, would, I conceive, have been a far more glorious church than one housed in the noblest edifice which Presbyterian love or wealth or pride has anywhere set up to enshrine the doctrines of the Westminster Confession, which represent both God and man as totally depraved, and such election of the few to everlasting life that annihilation of the human race would be a thousand times more beautiful and blessed in the eyes of any man of natural heart. For those were glorious thoughts of God and man, of life and destiny, that David Swing delivered on the minds of those who heard

him speak from his Chicago desk. Such a theology as that of the Westminster Confession or the English Articles is not made any more glorious by smothering it in music or in architectural beauty. A gilded corpse, a skeleton tricked out in finery, is more, and not less, ghastly than the naked thing. "I want to meet my God awake," said Maria Theresa; and a brave woman or a manly man would say that of the devil in his theology. If the hatefulness and hideousness are there, then let them be apparent rather than hid for the eye with roses which do not hide them for the mind. But it is not only the horror, but the puerility, of the traditional cult and dogma that offends the rational man. Now, I have seldom found myself in a more chill and barren place of worship than in the Little Portland Street Chapel where James Martineau was formerly the preacher. It was enough to give one a rheumatism of the mind and of the body,—both at once,—like the best room of the New England farmer's wife. But, when Martineau was preaching there, the dome of St. Paul's or of St. Peter's great basilica was not so high and grand as that which hung above the enraptured listener. He was in the temple of the universe; he was listening to the music which the morning stars have never ceased to sing. On the contrary, the Roman doctrine never seemed to me so childish, so ridiculous, as when I stood under that mighty dome of St. Peter's which Michel Angelo swung in the Italian air. Here was a church which had taken 1,854 years to work out the monstrous truism that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was conceived without original sin,—as if every child were not,—and 1,870 to work out the monstrous fiction of an infallible pope. The glorious building seemed to shrivel in the poisoned air of such intolerable absurdities. But, given such a glorious thought of God and man, and life and death, of duty and religion, as that of Martineau and many another preacher of a rational and human faith, and the meanest building would expand to infinite dimensions, and the most superb in Christendom would seem too narrow and too low and mean to be the

outward symbol of that glorious church prefigured in his glowing speech.

But we hold these treasures in earthen vessels. There is one supreme, invariable condition, which, unobserved, would remand a church of the most glorious ideas of man's life and destiny, and of God who is over all, blessed forever, to a place below the church of the dogmatists or ritualists, if this or that shall be a church of men and women so enamoured of their thought and worship that they are not content to hold them in separateness or isolation, but must share them with as many as they can persuade to go with them. Given any church honestly persuaded of the truth and fitness of its forms of thought and worship, and earnestly endeavoring to give these freer course, and I would say it is more glorious than one holding a doctrine of ideal perfection, one in which every mind should have the soaring thought of Martineau, but at the same time infected with the disposition to sit down in leisurely enjoyment of this thought without doing anything to send it far and wide upon a mission of good will to men. A glorious church must be a missionary church. It is as true of churches as of individuals that they are not finely touched but to fine issues; and God and nature never lend to them the smallest portion of their excellence, but that, like thrifty creditors, they demand both thanks and use. A faith that is not worth enthusiasm, devotion, service, sacrifice, is not worth the keeping: let it go. But it may be said, "So far as liberal opinions are concerned, they are now in the air. The air is full of them."

"All can raise the flowers now,
For all have got the seed."

The estimate is much too flattering to the liberal community. The amount of disintegration which is affecting traditional opinions is indeed very great. But there are two considerations which should appeal to the enfranchised mind. One is that there is a great gulf fixed between the conclusions of progressive orthodoxy as scholarship and the

preaching which is still common and almost universal in orthodox pulpits. This preaching, where the preacher is well instructed, often veils with a misty phraseology the known results of Biblical investigation, so that they reach his hearers' minds like a spent ball that only raises dust instead of one that would go shattering through his conventional and inherited beliefs; and, where the preacher is not well instructed,—the more common situation,—he goes on voting for Andrew Jackson, retailing the Ptolemaic astronomy, and the recipe for phlogiston,—doing, that is, the things in the religious sphere which correspond to these things in politics and astronomy and physics. The other consideration which should appeal to the enfranchised mind is this: that difference from orthodoxy is not a final good. A man may differ from orthodoxy very widely, and be no better off than the most orthodox, but rather worse. For your orthodox believer often keeps his creed unopened like the family Bible, all the year round, and for daily use has some sweet trust in God, some tender hope for all who live and die, some honest admiration for the human excellence of Jesus that strengthens his weak purposes and inspires his laggard will. Then, too, a man had much better think wrongly about the deepest matters than not to think about them at all, not be touched and thrilled with the great mystery of the wonderful and teeming world. There is nothing beautiful that we should desire it in the indifference of thousands to everything remoter than their daily beef or mutton, or in the persuasion of so many that matter is the source of Spirit, the greater thing the offspring of the less. That is no glorious church, however high its thought, which can complacently regard the blank negation and the stupid indifference of many thousands all about us who are hugging themselves with the cheerfulest self-satisfaction, which does not find the word in its heart like a fire shut up in his bones, so that it is weary with forbearing, and it cannot stay, but must be up and doing, if, happily, it may widely share the strength and peace which have somehow been made the crown of its rejoicing.

For the practical realization of the ideal of a glorious church there must be something stoical in the temper of the men and women who look for its appearing. It is a far cry from the stern seriousness of the Puritan Sunday worship to such entertainments as are advertised every Saturday for the following day,—sermons on such taking subjects as “The Religion of Fat Men” or “What Jonah saw in the Whale.” I am inclined to think that the Puritan’s was the better way,—better than that of any church which depends for its material success or crowded space on anything but its appeal to what is moral and religious in the mind and heart of man. That is no glorious church which is merely the purveyor of good music or good times, or of the funny preacher’s variety entertainment. Better churches of two, churches of one, as Emerson divined, than churches of thousands stooping so low to conquer popular applause. Better no churches at all than such as these. The same amount of money spent upon the theatre and the circus would yield much better returns.

I aim at no exhaustive catalogue of the qualities of a glorious church: but before I close I wish to make a claim which, however, disallowed by the traditional religionists, can certainly be made good. It is for the inclusion in the possessions of the glorious modern church of reason and philanthropy of all those things of which the older and the larger churches are most proud. Their centuries are ours, their cathedrals are ours, their theologies are ours; and, if it must follow in due course that their aberrations of superstition and immorality are also ours, let it be so. The glorious modern church of reason and philanthropy is human, as it is nothing else; and nothing human is foreign to it. What do I mean by saying that the great things on which the older churches pride themselves are also ours? I mean that the great law of evolution holds in these things as in all others. I mean that there has been no break in the development, that there is no missing link between the church of Channing and Parker, and the church of Hildebrand and Leo. All of the past was necessary to the pro-

duction of the present hour,—the saints, the heroes, the scholars, the martyrs, Augustine and Luther, Anselm and Aquinas, Calvin and Edwards, Fox and Wesley. “All these died in the faith, not having received the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.”

Last, but not least, the glorious modern church of reason and philanthropy is not only inclusive of the entire Christian development, so that you and I may feel as much at home in Westminster's nave or Amiens' choir as any regular functionary of the worship there, but it is inclusive of all religious aspirations in the universal life of man.

“You, whose hearts are fresh and simple,
 Who have faith in God and nature,
 Who believe that in all ages
 Every human heart is human;
 That in even savage bosoms
 There are longings, yearnings, strivings
 For the good they comprehend not,
 That the feeble hands and helpless,
 Groping blindly in the darkness,
 Touch God's right hand in that darkness,
 And are lifted up and strengthened,”—

you who believe these things are by that sign, and to the extent that you believe them, members and servants of a more glorious church than any organized in Christendom or beyond its furthest bound. It is the church universal, the church of all truth, of all goodness, the church of humanity, whose beginnings were before the dawn of history, whose priests and prophets have been all faithful souls, whose confession has not yet been sufficiently revised for publication in a convenient form, whose ritual is love to all the brethren. To such a glorious church as this what one of us would not belong? What one of us does not belong to it who has the open mind, an active sympathy with all good endeavor and all lofty trust?

GOOD OUT OF NAZARETH.

THERE has been considerable discussion about Nathanael's question, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" What was there wrong about the little town, nested among the foot-hills of the Lebanon range as they sloped down into the great plain of Esdraelon, that could justify such a contemptuous expression? Or what evil reputation had the little town that could make such an expression natural? I am afraid that, after all the ingenuity which has been directed to the matter, we must confess we do not know. The ordinary line of explanation is that Nazareth was a part of Galilee; and Galilee was disparaged and despised by the Jews of Southern Palestine, by those of Jerusalem especially, because of the boorishness of its inhabitants, their brogue which "gave them away," as our youngsters would express it, and made them a laughing-stock to saucy girls in the great holy city, and not only for these things, but also because of the mixed character of its population, tending to laxity of religious doctrine and ceremonial. There were Romans, Syrians, Arabs, Phœnicians, Greeks, scattered among the Galilean Jews, here sparsely, there in great numbers. The great caravans had their tracks across the country; and these excited interest, and bred familiarity. Many a Jew took to camel-driving in the caravans, anticipating so the employment of Mohammed six centuries further on. From these relations often came mixed marriages. To the Southern passion for religious purity and isolation all these things were intolerable, so that it would have been very natural for a Southern Jew to infer the evil character of a part from the evil character of the whole, and ask, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

But it was not a Southern Jew who asked the question : it was a Galilean Jew, and one, moreover, if the New Testament account is to be trusted here, whose home was in Cana, which, if not a next neighbor town to Nazareth, was only six or eight miles to the north across the hills and dales. And this naughty fact entirely spoils the ordinary explanation. Can it be possible that here was only one of those prejudices which neighboring towns so frequently indulge in towards each other ? My neighbor who was born in Chesterfield can never speak of Goshen Street, our next neighbor on the north, a little nearer than Cana was to Nazareth, without calling it by an opprobrious name ; and, if Worthington on the west is not equally disparaged, I suspect it is because he loves it for his dear old mother's sake who lived and loved there in the peace of God. It may be very different now in Marblehead ; but, when I was a boy, we had names of various contempt for Salem, Lynn, and Beverly, and would have been much surprised to hear that any good thing had come out of either one of them. This in the case of Salem, our nearest neighbor, would have surprised us most ; but there was Nathaniel Hawthorne in my childhood, tuning his instrument for the great part he was to play in literature, and there was my great scholar friend, Samuel Johnson, and Charles Gerrish, whom you knew, and others, to have missed whose faith and love would have been a very great misfortune, though I had been all ignorant of my loss. So many a place and circumstance from which we expect nothing and which we may despise may hold for us a quite immeasurable good, and not for us only, but for the breadth of continents and for millions of mankind. So oftentimes it is the nearest things which we least appreciate or understand, the "common things which round us lie" waiting for some Thoreau or Darwin to pluck out the heart of their mystery, and show us how wonderful and beautiful they are.

"Alas ! we think not what we daily see
About our hearths, angels that are to be,

Or may be if we will and so prepare
Their souls and ours to meet in happy air ;
A child, a friend, a wife, whose fond heart sings
In unison with ours, breeding her future wings."

If great events were subject to the attraction of beautiful places, there were few, if any, places in Judea where a great soul was likelier to take on the fleshly screen than in Nazareth town. A friendly voice objects that in my opinion that Jesus was born in Nazareth I am over-confident, that I set aside the Bethlehem origin with a too careless hand. It is a matter of very little importance : so long as a great man is born, it matters little where he first breaks in upon the scene. If Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Nazareth would remain his parents' home ; his own for more than thirty years ; the place of all his first impressions, early recollections ; where he saw all those aspects of a busy life which afterward sprang up into a second and immortal life in his parables and proverbs by the seashore or on the mountain side. Nevertheless, that Jesus was born in Nazareth I have as little doubt as that he perished at Jerusalem. For his birth in Bethlehem we have no evidence beyond the opening chapters of Matthew and Luke ; that is to say, no evidence at all. For these beautiful chapters are almost wholly mythical. They are the first Christmas poems ; and, though they have been paraphrased a thousand times, their beauty has not been excelled. They abound in mutual contradictions. From Matthew we should infer that Bethlehem was the parental home ; from Luke, that the birth of Jesus was on the occasion of a parental visit to the ancestral town. And this is plainly a device of the mythologist to reconcile the Bethlehemite birth with the well-known Galilean extraction, a very clumsy device—the taxing of Quirinius, which is made the occasion of the journey, having been ten years or more after the birth of Jesus, and the basis of his taxation having been the dwelling-place and civil abode. But the entire story of the Bethlehemite birth is a tissue of incongruities. How it rose is plain enough, for it was a common

belief that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (David's town); and, when in course of time Jesus came to be recognized as the Messiah, that he was born in Bethlehem followed as a matter of course. The story was of late origin. Neither Mark has it, nor the Gospel to the Hebrews, the basis of our Matthew; and in John the people are said to have missed the Messianic sign of Bethlehemite origin. On the other hand, the Gospels teem with indirect allusions to Nazareth as the place from whence he sprung.

Glad if a world of loveliness could lie around the growing boy, we may be glad that Nazareth was his home until the imprisonment of John the Baptist irresistibly impelled him to lift up the banner that had fallen from the Baptist's hand. For, whatever Nazareth lacked to justify Nathanael's taunt, it did not lack for beauty of situation or surroundings, if we may trust the chorus of voices in all ages that have sung its praise. Our earliest description of it, some twelve centuries old, is an enchanting picture of the fertility and beauty of its environment. Even in our day Renan assures us it is charming, "the only place in Palestine where the soul feels a little relieved of the burden which weighs upon it in the midst of an unequalled desolation." Although I have not seen it, I dare not hope that I can better his description: "The horizon of the town is limited; but, if we ascend a little to the plateau swept by a perpetual breeze, the prospect is splendid. To the west are unfolded the beautiful lines of Carmel, terminating in an abrupt point which seems to plunge into the sea." "Through a depression between the mountains of Solam and Tabor are seen the valley of the Jordan, and beyond the high plains of Perea, forming a continuous line. To the north, other mountains sloping to the sea disclose the Gulf of Khaifa. Such was the horizon of Jesus. This enchanted circle represented the world to him for years." This nature, at once smiling and grand, was not the whole education of Jesus, as Renan says; but it was certainly a part of it, and an important part. True, he might have lived amidst much grander and more

beautiful surroundings, and have felt no impress of them on his heart. John Calvin lived in Geneva for some thirty years; but he might as well have lived in Flatland, where they have space in only two dimensions, length and breadth, for all the good he found in Alpine summits or the Jura's rounded tops, the lake's far-smiling beauty, or "the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone." But we have reason to believe that the temperament of Jesus was as different from Calvin's as his theology, and that the beauty of the world about him passed into his heart.

So, then, if eyes were made for seeing, the reproach of Nazareth, whether it was the mere prejudice of the neighborhood or a wider sentiment, did not inhere in any lack of natural beauty, while of the fertility of its farms and vineyards it had reason to be proud. The industrious commentator has endeavored to make out that the people of Nazareth were uncommonly depraved,—this from their treatment of Jesus in the main. But there is nothing in that treatment which might not easily have happened in any other Galilean town, especially if Jesus had provoked his fellow-citizens to wrath by such intemperate speech as the third evangelist puts into his mouth at his first speaking in their synagogue. Puts into his mouth, I say; for there is every reason to believe that Jesus was as innocent of such a splenetic outburst as of the killing of the boy who spoiled his little fish-pond in the apocryphal gospel of his infancy.

Perhaps the reason for expecting nothing good of Nazareth was that nothing good, at least nothing remarkable, had ever come of it in the way of historical incident or personal renown. Judea was such a little country—you could walk the length of it in three days, and the breadth of it in two—that almost every place in all its borders had some legend of heroism, or battle, or prophetic zeal, or patriarchal wandering or rest; but Nazareth had none. You may read every verse in the Old Testament, and you will find no mention of it,—not a sentence, not a word. Could any good thing come out of such an unknown place, without

a type to match the antitype of any great event. We of to-day can hardly understand how far this reasoning went; for, while our proverb is, "History never repeats itself," it was their confident opinion that it never does anything else, or, at any rate, that great events are of the feline race, and have an attachment for places that is marvellously strong. That something wonderful or significant had happened in a certain place was to the countrymen and contemporaries of Jesus a sure sign that something else would happen there. This habit of thought found rich expression in the entire circle of Messianic expectations. Because David had been born in Bethlehem, the Messiah would be born there, and so on. Here was a capital reason for the doubt that the Messiah had been born in an unheard of place. If it was not the reason for Nathanael's contempt of Nazareth, it must have been a reason with a great many for doubting that Jesus of Nazareth, son of a peasant carpenter, was he that should redeem Israel. And truly he was not in any sense in which the hope of such a one was held by the majority.

That many a good thing came out of Nazareth for the young Jesus, child and youth and man, fitting him for the work he had to do, giving him that "liberal education" which no great man can ever do without, whether his college be in "seclusions ivy-hushed" or under heaven's immeasurable dome; in long-drawn forest aisles or in the thick of various homely toil,—that many good things of this sort came out of Nazareth for Jesus, only those can doubt who have never read the New Testament in any genuine way. Read it in such a way, we straightway discover that the Nazareth of Jesus' time, whether it was good or bad, was certainly alive, and that nothing of its life escaped his open-eyed intelligence and human sympathy. What are his parables and his discourses but abstracts and brief chronicles of the things about him that continually fed his eye and heart? To read them, not as a religious exercise, but for simple joy in a good thing when found, is to be made partaker of a busy life, to toil

with men in their vineyards, dig with them in their gardens, plough with them in their fields. All is movement, stir, activity. Though the houses, simple cubes of stone, seem built to last forever, new ones are always going up. The barns are filled to bursting, and new ones must be built. The mill-stones are worn out with their work, and new ones are put in. In the market-place there is haggling with laborers; and the children play funeral or wedding, piping or mourning with appropriate zeal. The sounds of singing and dancing make themselves heard far off. Far into the night the revelry goes on; and the noisy revellers disturb the honest people, knocking at their doors. Others are so busy buying ground or oxen, or getting married, that they cannot go when bidden to their neighbor's feast. As Jesus said, "They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded, they married, and were given in marriage"; and he saw it all, and the poetry and charm and mystery and pathos of it all passed into his mind and heart, and in due time came forth again to illustrate and adorn the precepts and the parables with which he would fain have led his friends, his neighbors, and his countrymen to the home of their souls' peace and joy. Nowhere, except in Shakspeare, do we find such vital appropriation of "common things that round us lie." For the Jewish rabbi, as for the English poet, every thing was grist that came to his mill, and the attrition of his genius made it the bread of life to millions of mankind.

"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" The life of Jesus is the answer to that personal or proverbial taunt, and the influence which that life has had upon the Christian centuries. Some would say that thence came Christianity; but that is true only as it is true that the Mississippi, when its last tributary stream has been received into its mighty flood and it spreads itself into its delta's wide lagoons, is all a product of the far-off hills and plains above its junction with the first of its great tributary waters. Historical Christianity has and has had much of both good and bad that did not come out of Nazareth. Great tributaries of Greek phi-

losophy and Roman government and ritual and law have emptied themselves into it, subtracting from its purity while adding to its bulk; and much that has been considered Christianity by the ecclesiastics and the theologians, and the only Christianity worth fighting for and killing for, came out of Nazareth, and from the heart and life of Jesus, as little as the muddy turbulence of the Missouri and the mighty contributions of the Ohio and the Arkansas and Red came from Itasca's limpid waters, which sleep embosomed by soft-swelling hills, and do not dream past what great cities and mingled with what mighty rivers they shall find the sea.

Christianity in its historic course has not been all the moral idealist could desire. And, if the formalism of priests and the subtleties of theologians had exhausted its contents, we might well question whether any good for it or through it had come out of Nazareth at all. But these have not exhausted its contents. The spirit that was in Jesus has been also there,—love stronger than death; and many waters could not quench it, pouring down from heights ecclesiastical or swelling up from theologic deeps. As through every cable, rope, and line of the British royal navy runs the scarlet thread declaring to what service it belongs, so through every cable, rope, and line of the great ship of Christendom, through every manifestation of its power, there runs the thread of a compassion, a sincerity, a trust, which declares the heart of Jesus to be there,—still there, whatever strain may come, whatever winds of passion split the sails, on whatever voyages of fruitless search the ship may sail in frozen zones of speculative zeal, or whatever buccaneering may have turned her course to tropic seas rich with the spoils and trophies of ecclesiastic pride.

Let not my simile disguise the fact which it would fain reveal. It is that, however Christianity has misinterpreted the thought of Jesus, and buried it under a mountain-pile of alien forms of doctrine and observance, some good things out of Nazareth have been always there; and Christianity,

with all its failures and shortcomings, has been always something better because it has been always shamed, inspired, rebuked, by the ideals of tenderness and pity and compassion and sincerity, of fraternal sympathy and filial trust, which need as little critical acumen to discover them in the New Testament as the sun needs of candle-light when it is shining in the unclouded noonday sky. God only knows what Christianity would have been if it had not been shamed, inspired, rebuked, by these ideals; but that it would have been something very different from what it has actually been, and of much less ethereal temper, there can be no doubt. There have been dogmatism and bigotry and persecution; there has been greed of place and power; there has been simony of bishops, cardinals, and popes; there has been hatred of science, and her votaries have been imprisoned, afflicted, tormented; a monstrous self-denial has begot unnatural lusts, and, where God had set the solitary in families, asceticism has undone his work. But those for whom these things exhaust the history of Christianity have either never studied it at all or only with a fatal predilection for its seamy side. If there has been an apostolical succession which is but a figment and a fiction of the ecclesiastic's brain, there has been an apostolical succession which has been no fiction but a divine reality, which from Jesus of Nazareth to Father Damien has threaded all the centuries with living light, and strung the thread with deeds of tenderness and pity and self-sacrifice, as the stars in heaven for number and as innumerable as the sands that blow about earth's shaken coignes.

Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?—out of the unfamed, out of the near at hand; for these are designations that appear to correspond most naturally to the meaning of the Israelite, indeed, in whom there was no guile. The life and influence of Jesus, as I have shown, give for answer to that question a tremendous “Yea and Amen.” And all the course of history, and the experience of ten thousand times ten thousand individual lives, confirm what those

things teach. What says the proverb but that the expected never happens? The Jewish fancy of the feline character of the muse of history and fame, her attachment to familiar places, has nothing to support it in the catalogue of great events and mighty names. The persuasion that the lightning does not strike twice in the same place is as true of that rarer lightning we call genius as of the baser sort. Nazareth owes all its fame to Jesus, we are told. Before him it was all unknown, and has been since but for the glory that he left behind on the plain cubic houses, in the narrow, stony ways. What else should we expect? Would Stratford have been more than any other place if Shakspeare had not been born there, or Ayr but for that indentation in the wall of a poor cottage where Robert Burns was born? or would Bridge's Creek have been known twenty miles away, if Washington had not there begun the life which grew to such immortal excellence? And so we might go on till we were tired; for the earth is starred all over with places that have only a reflected light, that are known to us only as the places where Luther and Hampden and Lincoln and other such immortals first drew breath. As we read of genius and of character, we lament, and say, "Whence cometh any more?" And did any have forewarning of the great ones of the past; where they would come and how? Doubtless the men are born who shall be equal to the exigencies that shall arise. We shall not know them till they do arise. Without the anti-slavery conflict Lincoln would have been a joking local politician, and no more; and Grant would have been something less. Sometimes the question seems to be whether there are any Nazareths more for good things to come out of, any humble circumstances, any hard conditions, such as seem to have been the making of so many of the world's best men. Do not question it. To-day in huts where poor men lie, in shanties rude as that into which little Abe Lincoln came with hungry wail, boys and girls are acting now the parts which, when they are recorded by and by, shall keep children from their play and old men from the chimney-corner to enjoy the piteous tale.

Take it another way. Can any good thing come out of the unknown? Can any evil thing come out of it? From the unknown proceedeth every good and every perfect gift. For all we know to-day was once unknown. From the chaotic ignorance of the morning world the "passionate patience" of mankind has evolved all the fair growths of science in whose shade we sit with quiet hearts, eating their fruits and getting strength thereby. And, when we think what things have come out of the unknown, well may we build our altars to the unknown God, certain that there is nothing which can be brought into the sphere of knowledge which shall not increase our wonder and our trust. If all the infinite unknown is wonderful and glorious in proportion to the little that we know, how wonderful and glorious must be the unknown God!

But suppose it was that Nazareth was so near, so commonplace, so much like his own Cana six or eight miles away, that made the questioner so doubtful whether there could come any good thing out of it? Then his mistake would be no other than the mistake which men are making every day. If in the common things that round us lie there is not the material we need to build us up into the stature of a perfect manhood, then we shall find it nowhere under heaven's cope. The carpentry of Jesus and the narrow life of Nazareth furnished all he needed for a life whose words and deeds have transfigured and exalted nineteen hundred years. Ah! but these petty cares, these days when everything goes wrong! What good is there in such? Oh, much, if you can keep yourself serene and sweet amid the jar and fret. I know how hard it is. Great sorrows have in them something that is sedate and calm, and something that ennobles, though it breaks, our hearts. It is the little cares and worries and anxieties that shred away our calm and peace, unless, like Jacob wrestling in the dark, we cry, "I will not let thee go unless thou bless me," and force from them their secret as at the point of a celestial spear. Is it opportunity for heroism that you want? I had thought that any day

would furnish it. If at the day's end you find you have in all things done the best you can conceive, treating yourself and others with an absolute sincerity, the rising stars shall not be too superb to light you to your rest.

There is a quaint and admirable poem which is known to many of you well, perhaps to all of you, with which I will lead in the end of my discourse, assured that so much of it will be good and bright and pleasant as befits the Christmas time. It is the poem of the old English carpenter who was so pleased to think that Jesus was a workman at *his* trade.

“ ‘Isn't this Joseph's son?’— Ay, it is He ;
Joseph, the carpenter,— same trade as me ;
I thought as I'd find it,— I knew it was here,—
But my sight's getting queer.

“I don't know right where as His shed must ha' stood ;
But often, as I've been a-planing my wood,
I've took off my hat, just with thinking of He
At the same work as me.

“He warn't that set up that He couldn't stoop down
And work in the country for folks in the town ;
And I'll warrant He felt a bit pride, like I've done,
At a good job begun.

“The parson, he knows that I'll not make too free ;
But on Sunday I feels as pleased as can be,
When I wears my clean smock, and sits in a pew,
And has thoughts not a few.

“I think of as how not the parson hissen,
As is teacher and father and shepherd o' men,—
Not he knows as much of the Lord in that shed,
Where he earned his own bread.

“And when I goes home to my missus, says she,
‘Are you wanting your key?’
For she knows my queer ways, and my love for the shed
(We've been forty years wed).

“So I comes right away by myself, with the book ;
And I turns the old pages, and has a good look
For the text as I've found, as tells me as He
Were the same trade as me.

“Why don't I mark it? Ah! many says so,
But I think I'd as lief, with your leave, let it go:
It do seem that nice when I fall on it sudden,—
Unexpected, y' know.”

Alas for us who are not carpenters, and who cannot therefore taste exactly that sweet satisfaction which so warmed the old man's honest heart! And yet are we not each and all of the same trade as Jesus? We may not be building after his manner houses and barns, and making yokes for cattle and cradles for the babes new-born,—they say *his* carpentry had this and wider range; but, after the spiritual fashion, surely we are of his trade, building into character and life as best we can the stuff that lies about us in our narrower or wider world, often cross-grained, intractable enough, testing our skill and patience better so. And, surely, never was there building of wood or stone upreared by man's device so beautiful as we can make our souls if we will build them after the pattern we have seen upon the mount of our communion with the great souls of history and fame, and with his who is too little thought of with a grateful heart by men and women who would fain believe they are not slow to take the measure of a man.

THE NEARER GOD.

LAST Sunday afternoon I sat alone in the pleasant room assigned me in a friend's house in Dorchester, coveting sleep in vain, and bearing up under the disappointment with a patient heart because the snow-storm was so beautiful that to miss a moment of its beauty seemed a foolish waste. At the Sunday-school in the morning I had had a text straight down from heaven, the snow falling fast and silent without wind ; and I had told the children about the five most beautiful things uppermost in my memory about snow-storms and that sort of thing,—Emerson's "Snow-storm," Whittier's "Snow-bound," Higginson's chapter on snow-storms in his "Out of Door Papers," the chapter on the great snow-storm in "Lorna Doone," and Gannett's "Treasures of the Snow,"—and had advised them to read one or the other. For myself, in the afternoon I had taken Gannett's "Treasures of the Snow," and had finally got through with it,—a slow business, there were so many things to give me pause with their suggestiveness and loveliness, sometimes his own, sometimes another's, once Shakspeare's phrase about the winter trees,

"Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang";

and to drain that of its sweetness took me about a quarter of an hour. Geographically, I was within the limits of Boston, and, chronologically, I was within six years of the twentieth century ; but to all intents and purposes it was a country snow-storm that I saw, and it might have been one that came gently down from heaven a century ago. For the angle which I had deliberately chosen for my landscape shut out

the modernness that was crowding in on every side, and shut in a fine old colonial house more than a century old.

But the lofty elms about it, drooping more gracefully than ever under the incumbent snow, had been planted by the patriarch who lives in the fine old house. He is ninety-four years old, and he came to church in the morning to hear me preach in accordance with the habit of his life. Two lives as long as his and one of threescore years and ten would very nearly take us back to the Puritan settlement of Dorchester in 1630; but for seven generations he and his ancestors and descendants have lived on the same spot,* and carried on the same business without interruption until a short time since. All of these things entered into my meditation, and blended with the falling snow and with my friend's delightful study of the treasures which the snowflakes hold in trust for patiently inquiring souls. And, remembering that all the whiteness of the snow comes from the many angles and facets with which it reflects the light, it seemed to me my thoughts were all the whiter because they were reflections of so many different things,—the snow that fell so softly upon turf and bush and tree, the book which had so lovingly interpreted for me the winter's mystery, the beautiful old life of peace and quietness in the beautiful old house and home, and the beautiful young life growing up within this and about it, and filling it with hope and cheer.

And still the snow came whirling, eddying down, big flakes and little flakes, making the orchard trees more white than in the month of bloom; and somehow a sense of the snow as *God's snow*, fell as softly on my heart as the snow itself was falling upon roof and tree. The "It snows" of our common speech became "He snows" to my reflection and my thought, to my emotion even more than unto these. I found myself thinking of the time when all the various appearances and transactions of the natural world came to men's minds and hearts as the direct expression of the Almighty's power and love. "He giveth snow like wool, he

* Not quite from the beginning.

scattereth the hoar frost like ashes." This sort of thing abounds in the Old Testament. It is the only way in which men of old time, men at the stage of growth to which the Old Testament corresponds, conceived the relations of things natural and divine. "O mine own East!" cried Luria in Browning's play, contrasting the religion of the Arabian desert with that of Florence's fair streets and palaces,—

"O mine own East!

How nearer God we were! He glows above
With scarce an intervention. Presses close
And palpitatingly his soul o'er ours!
We feel him, nor by painful reason know.
All changes by his instantaneous will,
Not by the operation of a law
Whose Maker is elsewhere at other work!
His soul is still engaged upon his world."

Now, what I wish to say is that, so far are we from having forfeited the right to think and feel in that high Eastern way which made the morning of the world so beautiful, we have earned the right to think and feel that way more earnestly, more grandly, more consistently than could the men of the Old Testament. My sense that God was snowing as I sat there in my friend's upper chamber, looking out upon his father's house and trees, was nothing whimsical or fanciful, nothing to which I was not clearly entitled by the most serious thinking I had ever done and by the canons of our most rigorous philosophy and science. And what I could wish is that we might live more largely in the sense to which we are entitled by the canons of our most rigorous philosophy and science, and not in the sense which has its natural association with a science and philosophy which do not in these later times commend themselves to our most serious thought. What I could wish is that the beauty and the order of the world might continually present themselves to us as God's beauty and God's order, so that we might not live exclusively by admiration of such things, or by faith in them

and love for them, but by admiration for that Great Being in whom they inhere, by faith in him and love for him, as the unfailing source of all our good. Some of you may conceive that it really makes no difference whether we stop short with the things of nature and humanity or go on into communion with the Almighty Power,—go on to think of that, habitually think of that, as the “source whence all our blessings flow.” But I cannot believe that those of you who so conceive conceive wisely and well.

“He that doth look on glass,
On it may rest his eye,
Or, if he chooses, through it pass,
And all the heavens espy.”

Now, I will not say that those who see only the beauty and the order of the world are as those who see only the glass, and do not look through it upon the heavens beyond. But I will say that they are as those who look upon such a dome of many-colored glass as that with which the mediæval glass-makers or a modern Tiffany could stain the white radiance of heaven, and do not think that, but for that white radiance, all the art of the mediæval or modern glass-maker would be in vain. These are but fellow-laborers with God. And I know well enough that there are those who live so constantly in a region of abstractions, who have such a passion for the infinite and absolute, that for them the lovely outwardness of nature is as if it did not exist at all, or it is an obstruction to their sense of infinite and eternal things. And my own feeling would be that such people are much more unfortunate than those who live in the outward and external, and cannot get beyond their bright perfection to their source and ground. But happiest of all are they who, resolutely living in the *guten* and the *schönen*, the beautiful and good, of Goethe’s memorable line, live with equal resolution in the *gansen*, in the unity and wholeness of the world. Happiest of all are they who, not insensible to any outward beauty, continually and irresistibly

associate this beauty with an infinite and eternal source, and lift up their hearts to that with spontaneous gratitude and praise. It does make a difference. It is somehow as it is with a great poem, or a great picture, or a great statue or building. Undoubtedly, it is better to know something of the work than to know something of the worker, if we cannot have the double joy. And there are men who are most voluble concerning God who never seem to have seen any of his pictures, or read any of his poems, or admired any statue or building of his making. And we do well to count such men unfortunate compared with those who know his pictures, poems, statues, buildings, though they do not know the artist's name. But, surely, in things human those are the more fortunate who, through the picture, poem, statue, building, hear the speech and feel the clasp of a live man; who, as they read what Shakspeare wrote, or see what Millet painted, Michel Angelo carved, or Wren or Richardson or Bramante built for man and God, feel themselves entering into communion with some majestic soul. And, surely, the most fortunate of all are those who, not indifferent to the manifold appearances of nature and humanity, but filled by these with admiration, joy, and peace, do, nevertheless, find themselves continually sent back from their communion with these things into communion with that infinite reality which some call God, not imagining that they have used an all-sufficing name, but only that others will, as Thoreau said, know whom they mean. There is something wonderfully good and wholesome and satisfying in the thought of an Eternal Unity which takes up into itself all of the immense diversity of natural and human things. We are greatnessed by the greatness of our thoughts; and no man can live habitually with such a thought as this, seeing, as in a glass, the glory of the Almighty, without taking on more and more of that glory with each revolving year.

But so far I have done little more than state my preference for the unifying thought with and behind the multiformity. I have done nothing to make good my thesis that, so far are

we from having forfeited the right to enjoy this preference and to think and feel in Luria's and Isaiah's way, that we who have followed in the way of modern science and philosophy have earned the right to enjoy this preference, and to think and feel in that high way, more earnestly, more grandly and consistently, than ever could the men of ancient times. For see: the relation of the Almighty Power to the material and human world, as conceived by Luria and Isaiah in their own East, was that of a mechanic to his work. Their God was the divine artificer. They made God in their own image, the image of the greatest men they knew; and these were the great builders of their temples and their pyramids and palaces. Archæology teaches us nothing if it does not teach us that the great builder was the ideal man. The pyramids of Gizeh, the colonnades of Thebes, the ruins of Baalbec and Persepolis, of the Parthenon at Athens, and the aqueducts of Rome, and the childish satisfaction with which the chroniclers of Israel dwell on the structure of their temple at Jerusalem,—that great gilded toy,—all these things testify to men's loving satisfaction in the builder's art; and therefore it was natural and inevitable that, when they would conceive of God, they took the human builder and raised him to the highest terms and called him by their greatest name. And everything was the work of his hands. Read the great nature Psalms, like the 104th, and see how completely it was so, how brightly, sweetly, pleasantly. And, so long as this way of thinking held its own, you see how natural it was for men to associate the thought of God with every operation of the natural world. Whatever was done God did it. And, thinking and feeling so, men's thought and feeling took on a wonderful dignity and force and charm. It was a way that gave to their imagination wings, that made poetry as easy for them as prose, and easier. But you will say: We cannot cherish any longer that thought of a mechanic God, that thought of a divine artificer; it may have been beautiful, but it was not true. If our modern science teaches us anything, it teaches us

that God's relation to the world is not mechanical. But between our modern science and the ancient faith there has intervened a doctrine which, although natural and inevitable as a step in evolution, has been a step from which men's view of God's relation to the world has been far less inspiring than the view which it displaced. Certain things were seen to depend on certain other things, and those on certain others ; and so gradually the idea arose of an absentee God, a God who was elsewhere at other work or sunk in idleness, whose soul was not permanently engaged upon his world. Certain uniformities of nature's processes were perceived, and were called laws ; and these laws were sometimes regarded as legislative laws issued by an almighty autocrat or as personal deputies doing the Almighty's will. These laws were promulgated or these deputies were created far away in some dim morning of the world, and since then God had retired into himself, and had had nothing to do with the world's management except by an occasional miraculous irruption at Sinai or in Bethlehem. Hence, from those affirming the miraculous in Judaism or Christianity, we had such stuff as the assertion that God could easily enough break the laws that he had himself made, and the counter stuff, hardly less foolish, that he was bound to obey them, as a king is to obey the law of the land. The first money that I earned after I began a student's life was five dollars that I got for going round among the scientific professors of Harvard College, and asking them if they believed God's action to be immediate or that he impressed certain laws upon matter which had before been lifeless and inert. I felt very much like a fool going round with such a question, but I wanted the five dollars very much ; and Dr. Hedge had promised the president of a Methodist University that he would get for him the desired information, and had asked me to work it up. My errand gave me speech with Agassiz and Gibbs and other mighty men, and from some of them I got one answer, and from some another ; for at that time the scientific had not come so universally as they have since to see that nature's

laws are neither arbitrary regulations nor angelic deputies, but simply and only the constant habits of the Eternal Power. Thus, in 1859, we find Darwin talking of "laws impressed on matter"; and he chose for the leading motto of his great epoch-making work a phrase of Whewell's to the same effect. Now, any one who is not intellectually blind can see that the whole stress and tendency of this kind of thinking about laws as arbitrary regulations or celestial deputies or tendencies impressed upon matter is towards the elimination of God from the habitual thought and feeling and imagination of the world, and while, of course, it stands for a very real step in the evolution of science and theology (the science of sciences), it is less true and it is far less religious than the Old Testament thought that, whatever is done, God does it; and, whatever exists, God made it,— "fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind fulfilling his word; mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars, beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl."

"Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!"

That is the song which modern science sings. Remember that what I am trying to illustrate and enforce is that we of the modern time, we who have drunk deep from the cup of modern science and philosophy, have even a nearer God than those of ancient times whose God was somewhere outside the world as a divine artificer. Remember that all the ideas for which science and theology have been equally responsible, about the laws of nature as arbitrary regulations, or celestial deputies, or uniformities impressed on matter, have been miserable survivals of the original conception of God as a mechanician or a celestial autocrat. Even when we find these ideas in Darwin, they are the same miserable survivals as in other men: and it isn't strange that he should have them, because he was a specialist, and, though he brought a splendid contribution to the doctrine of evolution,

he had not, like Herbert Spencer, risen to the height of that doctrine when he wrote the "Origin of Species." All those ideas of laws as go-betweens of any sort between God and the universe, wherever found, are relics of the time when men made God in their own image, made him a great non-natural man, made him a builder, a royal builder, a sheik, a Pharaoh, a king. But all these ideas have been discredited by the course of modern science and philosophy as inconsistent with their evolutionary doctrine of the world. For this doctrine there is no absentee God, there are no secondary causes, there are no laws impressed on matter.

"God dwells in all, and moves the world and moulds,
Himself and nature in one form enfolds."

Laws are the habits of his constant, immanent activity. To conceive matter without laws is impossible. To conceive matter as non-existent is impossible. If ever there was a time or an eternity when God did not externalize himself in matter, it then existed in himself; and he built this great world-nest for us, as the sea-bird builds her nest from the warm feathers of her own maternal breast, that it might be fulfilled as it is written,— "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust."

Now, these things being so, what is more evident than that we have a nearer God than men have ever had before, nearer not only than the God separated from us by secondary causes, laws imposed on matter, while the Great First Cause retires into some dark primeval cave, but nearer also than the God of the Old Testament, the maker of all things that are. The difference is this: that there the nearness was like that which we enjoy with any artist when we see the strength and beauty of his work. As our hearts leap up with admiration for Raphael when we look upon his beautiful Madonnas, and for Beethoven when we hear his glorious music, and for Wren or Michel Angelo when we stand within the shadow of St. Paul's or beneath St. Peter's awful dome, so

do our hearts leap up with admiration for the Maker when we behold a rainbow in the sky, with admiration, love, and thanks toward him when we look on any grand or lovely thing that he has made. But when to our thought and our conviction God is not the maker, the creator, but the indwelling and unfolding life, when God is "never so far off as even to be near," then is it not evident that we have a closer bond than we could have at any previous stage of thought? Then it is not God who *makes* the snow-storm, but it is God who snows. Then the sea is not his, "for he made it"; but its mighty currents are the streaming folds of his self-woven garment, and the stars are shining dust upon its hem. Then in the whole course of nature, and in all the process of events, and in all useful and all glorious lives, it is not God's works that we encounter and embrace; but it is God himself, the clasp of his hand, the light of his eyes, the beating of his heart. You will understand that this is metaphorical. It is not as if I were tumbling back into the anthropomorphic pit from whence I was digged. I only mean to say that our evolutionary doctrine of the immanent divinity makes everything that is, not the most fair and wondrous workmanship of God, but the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, as the outward form and seeming of a man is, or should be, the express image of his indwelling and informing soul. And what I would have, if I could have my way, would be men's constant sense of intimate relation with this nearer and this nearest God. In terms of science and philosophy, he is our indefeasible possession; but old custom clings. Our thinking is all right; but our habitual feeling is a survival of the discredited theology of a mechanical creator, a great first cause, governing the world by general laws, as a benevolent Irish landlord governs his estates by deputy. All will come right in time. Our thought will be transmuted into habitual emotion; and God will be more near to us than to Moses' mountain or to Abraham's tent, the whole visible universe a theophany, God evermore becoming flesh, and tree, and flower, and

rock, and stream ; God evermore becoming bird and beast, man and woman, thought and love, poetry and art, patriotism and philanthropy, duty bravely done and sorrow meekly borne, and hope, unconquerable hope, for all who live or die.

Our only survivals are not those of the manlike deity and the "laws impressed on matter" coming in between us and the heart of God. Another is the distrust of matter as something foreign to God. The conception of the Gnostics, those speculators of the second century who have come to life again only a little changed in the theosophists of our own time, was that matter was such dirty stuff that God couldn't or wouldn't touch it with his own hands, and so, when he would make the world, put Jehovah—some said Jehovah, and some said Jesus—to the work. Hardly any one could be found in our own time talking such arrant nonsense ; but something, a good deal of the spirit of it, survives in our current thought. Notice the determination of certain enthusiastic thaumaturgists to find spirit the one sole and undivided human and divine reality, and their apprehension of matter as something to be condemned or sturdily ignored. Notice the satisfaction which others take in making their conception of Deity as abstract as possible, an absolute devoid of every attribute, *sans* thought, *sans* will, *sans* love, *sans* everything. Notice how often poetry, for all its general delight in the concrete, the visible and sensuous, comes to the support of this abstraction, as in Shelley's perfectly beautiful expression of a proposition intellectually monstrous and absurd,—

"Time, like a dome of many-colored glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity."

Notice how Science, too, comes to the support of this most doubtful tendency : She is so willing that Theology and Religion should rejoice together over some remote abstraction of infinity so long as she can have all the matter that she wants with which to work her spells.

From this order of conceptions, propertied by whomsoever, philosophical or scientific, thaumaturgic or poetic, all those who have entered deeply into the spirit of our modern thought, and plucked out the heart of its mystery, will appeal with choric unity. In the doctrine of an unknowable divinity, of whom we are nevertheless, for all his unknowableness, as certain as can be, there may be great intellectual satisfaction for the profoundly philosophical; and I have not the least desire to impugn the validity of this doctrine of Herbert Spencer as by him expressed. But what I care for infinitely more than this remote Unknowable is that it is the infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed, and that all things are the manifestation of this energy. It is not the far-away abstraction that entices my imagination and enthralls my heart, but the manifestation that I see and know. As Jesus says to the woman of Samaria in the Fourth Gospel adumbration, "You worship you know not what, we know what we worship," so sayeth every scribe instructed in the kingdom of science to those who find the only object of their worship in an abstract Unknowable. We know what we worship. It is the manifested God, the God who is never far from any one of us, whose body is the universe, and whose manifold beauty evermore solicits us with invitation to some new delight. So far is the prismatic dome of time from *staining* the white radiance of eternity that it breaks up its unqualified simplicity into a thousand lovely hues. Would the totality of nature be more beautiful if mountains, rivers, seas, and stars, and human forms and faces were all of the same color? I trow not. But what is the diversity of color in the material world in comparison with the infinite diversity of color, form, and motion, thought and feeling, purpose and desire and will, into which the prism of the finite world breaks up the blank infinity of God? Science shall not have matter for her sole manipulation and her selfish joy. It is the living garment of the Deity, how closely woven, of what an intricate pattern, yet not so intricate as it is beautiful. There is a materialism

which is not admirable. It takes delight in expressing the meaning of the universe in its own terms, apparently for the very reason that it conceives them to be the lowest possible terms. "Anything against the government," was the new-landed Fenian's creed; and "Anything against the universe," appears to be the creed of some, who really have no reason for their uniform depreciation. The universe has treated them very handsomely upon the whole, furnished them with abundance of bright sunlight and sweet air and a great many other things worth having. But the materialism of such people is not the materialism of science. Matter for that is something wonderfully fine and good. A distinguished Harvard professor once spoke of it as "dirt." But that was not *its* fault, but *his*, because, as Emerson put it, of "the mud in the bottom of his eye." One has but to read at random, not exhaustively, in the microcosmic lore of science, to wish that all the old-time Gnostics and Manichæans and all those who have contemned matter might come back and enjoy the new readings, or to hope that where they are dwelling now in glory everlasting they have some pleasant intimation of our "ethics of the dust." Then they might hush their breath to speak its sacred name. For, truly, it is worthy to be that which constitutes for us the visibility of God. However it may have been in "the times of that ignorance," thou art, O man, inexcusable who dost in these last days speak of this "very God of very God" as something base and mean. As if thou hadst never seen any of the lovely things in which it shapes itself,—the rose in June, the face of maidenhood, the treasures of the snow!

I trust I have made good the thesis with which I set out. It was that, so far are we from having forfeited the old-time sense of God's near presence, never in the world before could men enjoy this sense so fully and consistently as we. Our science and philosophy compel us to regard the whole sensuous order of the world as a visible and audible and tangible manifestation of the Eternal and the Infinite. It is not

as if his work was being carried on by general laws, while he withdraws into some silent and remote abyss, "far from the sphere of our sorrow." It is not as if the visible universe were his workmanship. That doctrine brought him near. Ours brings him nearer still. For not merely to our fancy and imagination, but to our closest thought, the visible universe is none other than the visible God. In him we live and move and have our being. In sun and moon and stars, in the soft-falling snow, the welcome rain, the fields it nourishes, the farmer's grain, the noble trees, the flowers, the beauty of the morning and the evening light, the men and women whom we love, the little children every day and hour arriving from "the everywhere" upon our coasts, all eager striving, and all earnest thought and will, all noble sacrifice and sacred trust,—all these things and such as these inhere in God, as we conceive and worship him, as the sun's light and warmth inhere in its unwearied strength. We bow our heads in reverence and awe before the thought of that invisible Reality which was before all worlds, and whose unfathomable mystery is the source and ground of all the bright appearance of the world. But that which cheers and gladdens us, that which delights our hearts and satisfies our souls, is that in every aspect of the natural and human world, in the thrill of every atom and the good of every possible event, we are in touch with the eternal God, we yield ourselves to the sweet comfort and the strong embracing of the everlasting arms.

AFTER CHRISTMAS.

IT is Christmas eve and near to Christmas morn. The children were long since in bed. The father followed late. Only the mother lingers for a little longer in the room where stands the Christmas tree with its unfallen fruit and glittering show. It has been a busy evening after a busy day; a busy day after a busy week; and she is very tired, almost too tired to think. She wonders if she has forgotten anything. She takes another look at her own treasury of gifts. She hopes that this one will please Dorothy, and that one Ted. She thinks of her own poor little Christmas when she was a little girl, and—the light seems going out. Reluctantly, still questioning her memory, she turns and goes.

'Tis Christmas night. Christmas has come and gone. Still stands the glittering tree, but all its fruits were gathered in the morning hours. The children are once more in bed; sleeping, it may be, the uneasy sleep which cornucopias entail. The strange, amorphous heaps of yesternight have disappeared. The gifts have reached their several destinations, and the shawls and rugs that covered them have been folded up and put away. The father and the mother sit and recall together the fortunes and adventures of the day. They are agreed that it has been a real success. The children were well pleased with their gifts. There is no doubt of that, and they were very thoughtful for their parents and each other. Yes, certainly—"it was one of the nicest Christmases that we have ever had." And yet! The father does not say that. The mother does not say it. They do not think it in that hard and definite way. But they feel something which, if it were

translated into thought and speech, would sound very much like that. In short, the reaction has set in,—the reaction which always follows periods of stress and strain. It is a kind of a come-down. There is an undeniable sense of flatness and vacancy in the domestic air. So many little cares, so many scores of errands, so many thousand steps, so many grave debates,—“Should it be this thing or that?”—such an amount of busy preparation, and now it is all over. It is Christmas night. Christmas has come and — gone.

And what have we here but an abstract and brief chronicle of many separate chapters in the book of our experience of life and love and death? Our Christmas exaltation and depression is, as it were, a tiny microcosmic symbol of much larger things. Life is no level plain, but has frequent contrasts of mountainous elevations and low-lying lands, those widening our horizons and these seeming to shut us in until we cry,—

“Rocky walls, will ye always be
Prisons until ye are tombs for me?”

And with the level that succeeds the height there is almost sure to come some loss of vision, some sense of meaner impulses and lower aims, some sharp repulsion from, or, what is worse, some base contentment with, “the same dull round and weary way.” Simon Peter said, “I go a-fishing.” There you have, perhaps, the greatest personal illustration in all history of the thing which I am trying to express. But we must not be too hard on the apostle. We must not think of him as having known a Christ tricked out with all the gaudy splendors of ecclesiastical mythology or crowned and sceptred with the attributes of the Nicene theology. But he had walked with Jesus in the towns of Galilee, by its lake-shore and mountain walls, and in Jerusalem, the Holy City. He had been the first to answer the passionate eagerness of Jesus, asking, “But whom do *you* say that I am?” with a bold asseveration, “Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God”; and, playing upon his name, Jesus had said

he was a Rock, and that on the rock of his confession he would build his church, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it. And now this Rock was pulverized to blowing sand by the tragical events with which the career of Jesus had reached its mortal close. The great words had all been spoken, the lovely parables had all been told, the great hopes that had shot up like fire had been quenched forever by that stream which flowed from Jesus' wounded side; and Simon Peter said, "I go a-fishing." I go back to the old humdrum life. I have had my mount of vision. Henceforth the valley's smooth expanse, henceforth the same commonplace existence as if I had never seen the face of Jesus, never heard his voice, never been thrilled with the passion of his enthusiasm for the kingdom of heaven upon earth. It was after Christmas with the fisherman apostle then and there.

It has been after Christmas with an innumerable company of men and women, in all countries and in all ages, at one time or another of their rich and varied lives. Sometimes it seems as if it were a dangerous business to have a time and mood of spiritual exaltation. It cannot last, and after it has come and gone life seems so poor and tame. And then, too, how often is the great cause depressed by miserable self-seeking, by the influx of those who go a-fishing for the spoils of office! They scent the victory from afar, and do not wait for it to crown the standards of the conquerors before they gather with their empty hampers under their tattered folds. You may read, in Rhodes's valuable "History of the United States since the Compromises of 1850," how, in 1856, *the promise of victory* in 1860 was a signal for the moral deterioration of the anti-slavery host. Mr. Curtis told me once with what a conscious shock he found himself, at a cabinet meeting during the Presidency of Grant, the only man present who had had any anti-slavery record or enthusiasm before the war. But sadder than the cormorants who come to feast on the heroic slain are they who cannot keep the heights they have attained. Thinking of the records of some

great reformers subsequent to their triumphant hour, one cannot otherwise than wish that they had perished then. When the great hope has been disappointed, then how often do we have embitterment of heart and life, and the man dwindles to a fraction of the stature that was his upon the heights of his supreme desire! Once at a private dinner, among the guests who were assembling, I saw one who was the rosiest embodiment imaginable of much dining out. "Who is that?" I asked my neighbor. "Why, that," he said, "is the great Blank of so and so," naming some social enterprise of great pith and moment and the loftiest ethical significance. "No, no!" I said: "don't tell me that." "You must know," said he, "that that volcano has burned out." Society has many such to show. Why, the present editor of the New York *Sun* was a Brook Farm idealist about fifty years ago! It has been after Christmas now with him for many a bitter year.

And, as it is with men and women in these large and public aspects of their lives, so is it quite as evidently in those aspects which are more private and more personal. What a fine glow suffuses the face of the young man who is a successful candidate for college honors on Commencement Day! How invitingly the future stretches out before him, and how confident he is that he shall win the prizes there as he has won them in his college course. And he is not going to be any miserable self-seeker: he is going to live for others, to take a man's part in the world, to stand for the good causes, for the truth betrayed and justice trodden in the streets. How easy it all appears in that fine glow in which he sits, enhaloed by the admiration of his friends, his mother, and his sisters, who have come a thousand miles perhaps to hear his wonderful Commencement part, and endanger their new gloves in the vehemence of their applause when he is through; and again when he stands before the President to receive his parchment *summa cum laude*! How easy then, how hard a little later, when he has entered on the steady grind, the long, slow, up-hill way which leads not only to the

heights of fortune and renown, but to a decent livelihood, and marrying the girl he loves ! It is after Christmas then. The gifts have been distributed, and the candles have gone out. He could almost wish there hadn't been that glow, that ardor, that elation ; and then it wouldn't seem so different, so *very* different now, so dull and flat and tame.

But he pegs away ; and in due course there comes a time when, if you could hear the song his heart is singing, it would be something like this :—

“ To-day a song is on my lips,
Earth seems a paradise to me ;
For God is good, and, lo ! my ships
Are coming home from sea ! ”

There is a sound of marriage bells. There is a scent of orange blossoms in the air. We have another mount of vision ; and, standing there “ on high, close to the sky, kissed by unsullied lips of light,” there is a new expansion of the horizon, such an one as there was not when the troth was plighted further down ; new possibilities unfold, and life takes on new meanings, larger and sweeter than it ever had before. Will it ever be possible again for the husband and wife to follow the lower, while they see the higher things, to do anything unworthily, anything disobedient to the heavenly vision that is then and there revealed ?

But the wedding bells do not ring on forever. The orange blossoms fade. There comes the daily care and fret. Business is dull ; collections are not good ; the grocer's bills are something fabulous ; below stairs the heathen rage, and the people at the office imagine a vain thing,— that their employer is growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice, and that it is all their doings and they have not had their reward. Oh, but there are a thousand and ten thousand steps by which two earnest, loving people can come down from the heights of vision to the dead level of the commonplace, the hot and dusty road of ordinary business or domestic cares ! And, once there, it is after Christmas for their minds and

hearts. They miss the color and the glow. The flatness is quite unmistakable. That divine foolishness of hope and purpose with which the air seemed sparkling and electric on the wedding journey, — was it divine at all, or was it only foolishness? There are times when one or the other of the two whom God hath joined together is tempted to ask this dreadful question, and sometimes the two together.

For some there comes, — and happy is their case, — “out of the everywhere into here,” a still, small voice that answers and rebukes that doubtful questioning. It is a baby’s wail. Again the mountain top! again the wonderful transfiguration which maketh all things new! Now how the Christmas candles glow, and how the branches gleam! A little child shall lead them. For his sake they will consecrate themselves; and how easy it will be to do everything kindly and nobly, led by that dimpled hand! And, if it is not so easy as they at first imagine, it is a great deal easier than it was before. Especially for the mother. She bears the child in pain; but, verily I say unto you, she has her reward in its soft clinging helplessness, in years of nearness, closeness, to its unfolding life. The husband must come down into the valley lands. She stays upon the heights. What limit to her shaping pressure of the plastic life, and of her joy in that! Paradise is at the feet of mothers, says the Rabbinic lore.

“Sing it, mother, Love is strong!
When the tears of manhood fall,
Echoes of thy cradle song
Shall its peace recall.

“Sing it, mother! sing it low,
Deem it not an idle lay,
In the heart ’twill ebb and flow
All the life-long way.”

Yet even with her constant inspiration, the habitual re-enforcement of her original consecration, who does not know that for the mother, as for the father, the parental office has

its under side, its humdrum possibilities? Not always does the vision glow as when it broke at first on the delighted eyes. The mother has the richer opportunity, the more constant inspiration, but then, too, the more wearying care, the more baffling disappointment, in her efforts to direct aright the energy of that "radiating, jaculating fellow." For both the after Christmas feeling is sometimes inevitable. The daily care is not so bracing to the will as the child "set in the midst" was promising to the imagination and the heart.

In the New Testament the mountain of transfiguration had a clouded top; and we read of the disciples that they feared when they entered into the cloud. And it is so with us in the actual experience of human life. That great experience which the Hebrew psalmist has named for millions the Valley of the Shadow of Death, is it not equally—for there is a union of contradictories in the spiritual as well as in the philosophic sphere—a mountain of transfiguration, whereon the loved whom we have lost are so transfigured that we see them as they really were, "in divine nakedness, discovered souls," and, so doing, learn how often we have failed to know the gift of God? Upon that height of sorrow, within the bosom of that sombre cloud, we see deeper than we could in the fierce light that beat upon our former life. We see farther, too, or think that we do so. We see the way that we must go when we go down again to the long levels of our ordinary life; and we resolve that what we must, we will. For we think and say that we shall not walk alone, that great memories will go down with us from our mount of sorrow, and blessed hopes, and these, like "beautiful, tall angels," will keep with us on either hand, unseen of others' eyes, enshielding us from every form of wrong. And with some it is not otherwise than according to the similitude of their mountain vision. They go forever after companioned by great thoughts, made strong by their companionship for every generous word and noble work. But it is not so with all. The memory of a vision has not the vision's moral stress; and, in the busy, rushing, multitudinous cares and

pleasures and distractions and anxieties of their habitual experience, how often does the memory fade, and all its high behests, which at first seemed so easy of performance, so inevitable, fall with an ever-fainter music of entreaty on the inward ear!

“How strange it seems, with so much gone
Of life and love, to still live on!”

How much more strange it seems to us in moments of clear self-revelation that we can live on in much the same poor, vapid, thoughtless, careless, selfish way as that we walked with laggard, aimless steps before we were withdrawn into the mountain's cloudy top, and were vouchsafed some clearer knowledge of the good that we had lost, some teaching of the way to earn our right, past, present, and to come, to all the excellence resumed!

Now, seeing that these things are so,—that there are these tides of the spirit heaping themselves high upon the sandy reaches of our lives, and then ebbing away with “long withdrawing moan,” these Christmas and these after Christmas times, the exalted moods when everything seems possible, and then the reaction, the depression, the dead level, when even ordinary tasks seem hard, and ordinary burdens heavier than we can bear,—what is the word of the spirit for the ordering of our lives, so that we shall not be worse off than if the higher moments never came, so that we may economize their plastic stress in some degree, though we may not lift up our eyes unto these hills from whence cometh our help, as if it came from these alone? One way of salvation is to avoid, as far as in us lies, the moods of exaltation; to extend the prayer of Agar, — “Give me neither poverty nor riches,” — so that it may cover spiritual equally with material things.

“The string o'erstretched breaks, and the music flies;
The string o'er-slack is dumb, and music dies:
Tune us the sittar neither low nor high.”

But this way is the way of cowardice; and it is, moreover,

the way of deliberate acceptance of the minimum of life. The highest moods, the grandest exaltations, come to us in the line of the most natural experience of men as men : they march like shadows with the great natural sacraments of love and life and death. To forego them is to forego the glory of the human, the distinctive attributes of men and women. Those who accept Browning as their teacher will never yield to this temptation. His standard of success is the number of great hours, splendid moments, supreme exaltations,

“When just this or that *great* impulse,
Which for once has play unstifled,
Seems the whole work of a lifetime
Which away the rest has trifled.”

But Tennyson's is another way, that of steady obedience to the laws of social and individual well-being. He seems to say : “Distrust the exalted mood. Trust only patient continuance in well-doing.” Which shall we follow of these two immortal guides? Neither, it seems to me, with absolute confidence. Certainly, not Browning with exclusive zeal. It will not do for us to stake the chances of that game which we call life on the great moments of existence. Let them be welcome, and thrice welcome, when they come smiling with joy and gladness, and when they wear the mask of sorrow entertained as such as may be angels, unawares. Nor let us be content with such great moments as come to us unsought or in the natural order of our lives. Let us seek to multiply them, for we can do this ; and one of the best ways of doing it is by abandoning ourselves to the sway of mighty books. For it is true, as one who knew has written :

“There is no frigate like a book
To take us lands away ;
Nor any courser like a page
Of prancing poetry.
This traverse may the poorest take
Without oppress of toll ;
How frugal is the chariot
That bears the human soul ! ”

A great book re-enforces the great moments of experience. It helps us to economize their force. It holds a mirror up to nature, and we see ourselves therein, not always an encouraging or delightful counterfeit. Sometimes it doesn't take a book, only a brief story, or a poem of five or six lines, to take us up into an exceeding high mountain, and show us the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and the kingdom of heaven and the glory of that also,—the glory that we have foregone. One of these poems, great in littleness, came to me only a few days ago. It is called "Calvary," and it might just as well have been called "Success" or "Hell."

"If he could doubt on his triumphant cross,
How much more I in the defeat and loss
Of seeing all my selfish dreams fulfilled,
Of having lived the very life I willed,
Of being all that I desired to be?
My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me!"

Now, I do not know how it strikes you; but for me to read a bit of verse like that is to be seized, as by the hair, and carried to some mountain height, a Sinai's top, thunder-shaken, lightning-shattered, terrible with the annunciation of the law of sin and death.

But let us multiply the great experiences and visions to the best of our ability; and, if we are wise, we shall not look to them exclusively for the unfailing sources of our strength and peace. Let Browning teach us the worth of the great moments; but let us listen also to the voice of Tennyson, insisting on the superior importance of the steady pull of an obedient will in harness to the daily load of personal and social care. As between this voice and that which celebrates the high tides of the spirit, the mountain tops of vision, the great moments of existence, as the measure of the fulness of our life, I am compelled to think that this is the more sane, authoritative, and infallible. For

"We cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides."

We cannot multiply indefinitely the great moments of existence.

Love, life, and death have but a few at their command; and, though we do our best to supplement these with such uplifts of heart and will as come to us from great books and poems and music, or such appreciation of the work of science that we can think after its profoundest teachers those thoughts of God which they think after him, if we are wise, we shall not look to any of these things, or all of them together, for our best help, for our most stable strength. We shall look for these to our habitual work, to the doing of it with a good conscience, "as ever in our great taskmaster's eye," meaning by that as ever in the presence of our ideal of an excellence as complete as we can compass with the joint energy of brain and heart and hand. For to do the work well, whatever it may be, so that it be something naturally allied to human needs or human joys, is to love the work, and to rejoice in it, and be glad. The reason why so many do not love their work, or even like it, is because, from school-boys and house-servants up to manufacturers and merchants and statesmen, they are not doing it well. If a man scamps his work, he is as sure to hate it as he is to hate the man or woman whom he treats abominably. Have you read Rudyard Kipling's "Hymn of the Engineer," which is just hot from the press? If not, make no delay; and, if you skip the rest, be sure you read that part about the great ocean steamer's engine doing its tremendous work. "Lord, send a man like Robbie Burns," he cries, "to sing the Song of Steam." You'll think, with me, if Robbie Burns were back again, he couldn't do it any better than it has been done. But you will object, of course, that it isn't every man that has an ocean steamer's engine to drive, and wax romantic over, and poetical. No, it is not; but, even as God is God, there is no man, no woman, of us all, no youth or maid, that has not his or her place at an engine in comparison with which the throbbing wonder in a Cunarder's hold is as a baby's toy. And no man can delegate his place to any

other, or put off his work. Do it he must, or something will go wrong. Of what am I thinking and speaking but of the engine throbbing in this great World-ship on which we sail, bound from what port we know not to a port which does not yet appear. Stokers are we, the most of us, and not chief engineers? No matter. There must be stokers with the rest. And in this Ship, upon these seas, no man can do his set task faithfully without a joy in all his members that he is allied to such a thing of God as that which carries him, as it has carried millions, safe from shore to shore.

And now I have set the doctrine of Browning and the doctrine of Tennyson over against each other, as if they were opposed, and as if there were no middle term. Here the great moments, there the steady grind. But this is not the whole story; and there is another poet, Matthew Arnold, who has told the rest. You have heard it in this place a score of times, because it is one of those bits of poetry with which I like to introduce my morning service,—a ritual that is more satisfying to my taste and heart than the more formal kinds.

“We cannot kindle when we will
The fire that in the heart resides.
The spirit bloweth, and is still:
In mystery the soul abides.
But tasks in hours of insight willed
Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.”

If they are true,—those last two hopeful, solemn, awful, glorious lines,—then it is not so terrible, as it has so far appeared, that the great moments pass, and leave us dull and cold; that by so much as we climb into the heavenly ether, by so much does the lower atmosphere oppress our laboring hearts. If they are true, then the great moments and the habitual tasks do not stand over against each other in mere disconnection or flat opposition. If they are true, then it is something, it is much, to have seen the vision of things possible,—things possible, although the exaltation does not last, and although the common way seems harder and more color-

less and bare because it is so different from what we thought that it would be when, from the mountain's top, we saw it winding far away into a purple distance, wherein every hope became the fulness of desire.

And they *are* true,—those words of hope and cheer. The poet from whose heart they came was not one who was given to exaggeration of life's ease and pleasantness. He saw its sterner side. But this, also, saw he, with the rest ; and many hundreds, many thousands more, have seen it just as clearly as he saw it, have made full proof of it in their own experience of worse and better things. And, anyway, the doctrine is one that is deserving of a patient hearing and an honest trial. And so, praise God with me for the great moments in which all things seem possible for us, and for the common tasks that we cannot do with steady faithfulness without loving them and being glad in them ; and then, besides, that the great moments cannot be utterly forgotten, and that what seemed so easy on the heights of our transfiguration can somehow be done, albeit with aching hands and bleeding feet, and hearts that wonder at the name of joy as if she were a stranger unto them. Praise God for this, at least,—that, once the better things have been revealed to us, we can be satisfied with nothing less than their abiding peace.

“ Not to content our lowness, but to lure
And lift us to their angelhood,
Do their surprises pure
Dawn far and sure
Above the tumult of our blood,
And, starlike, there endure.”

MODERN MIRACLES.

NOT long ago I read a book called "Lourdes." It is by Émile Zola, the great French realist, whose novels have, for the most part, an unsavory reputation. No one denies their power, but they are very frankly realistic; and dealing, as several of them do, with life's baser elements, the page is often far from being clean and sweet. So I have heard and read. I cannot speak from personal knowledge, for until now I have never read one of Zola's books. This one, too, is frankly realistic; but a more noble and impressive book I have not read for many a day. Do I advise you to read it, if you have not done so already? Well, as to that, I can only say, as Jesus said of his doctrine once upon a time, "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it." Those of you who try it will find it infinitely depressing, infinitely sad. It may give you a headache. It will certainly give you the heartache. But a more suggestive book I have not read for many a day,—one more provocative of serious thought, one fuller of the modern problems that a brave man ought to face. It has passages of marvellous strength, others of a tenderness and beauty not to be surpassed. Neither in Buddha nor in Jesus will you find a purer sympathy with human misery, a more beautiful compassion for the victims of intolerable ill.

Lourdes, I need hardly say, is a town of Southern France, situated at the foot of the Pyrenees on the river Gave. There in 1858 Bernadette Soubirous, a girl of twelve or fourteen summers, frail, sickly, undeveloped, her mind far more childish than her body, given to strange fancies, while out gathering sticks with two young companions, in a romantic

spot along the river,—a grotto formed by overhanging rocks,—beheld a vision which her companions did not see,—a vision of the Virgin Mary, who invited her to come again, and who finally disclosed to her the miraculous properties of a spring bubbling in the grotto, and expressed a wish that a church should be built upon the spot. From this weak beginning came by gradual increase a most remarkable development; and now that grotto is the object of a boundless reverence, the scene of an immeasurable suffering and hope, visited continually by the curious and devout, the numbers at the annual pilgrimages swelling to two hundred thousand,—in the year of the coronation of the Virgin to five hundred thousand souls.

What Zola does in this book is to describe one of the great annual pilgrimages, as he saw it with his own eyes, with photographic minuteness and fidelity. From Paris to Lourdes with the stay there and return was a matter of five days; and to each of these days a separate part—a series of five chapters—is assigned. Nothing is omitted. The horrors of the journey, with its terrible “white train” packed with sufferers of all sorts; the “Glorias” and “Aves” almost continually going up, and either drowning the cries of misery or transmuting them upon the quivering lips; the tumult of the arrival; the rush and confusion at the hotels and hospitals; the sordidness of priests and people anxious to outdo each other in the profits which this tide of misery is rolling to their feet; the great processions at night, their thirty thousand candles glimmering like another heaven answering to that above; the service at the grotto, with its impassioned litanies of compulsory prayer, “Powerful Virgin, save our sick,” “Mary, thou art our only hope,” “Jesus, Son of David, save our sick,” “Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst heal us,”—thousands in unison, lashed into a fury of devotion by the officiating priest, sending up these doleful cries; the alternations of despair and hope; the real or the imagined cures; victims of intolerable suffering and languor springing to their feet, and crying, “I am cured! I am cured!”; the rage, the

bitterness, of disappointed wives and mothers mourning for their dead, refusing to be comforted; and then the bustle of the return; the cured so happy and so pitiful of those the Virgin had not deigned to bless; these crushed by their despair, or looking forward with unconquerable hope to the next annual pilgrimage,—all of these things, and a hundred others, which I must not enumerate, and with a force and feeling of which my meagre summary does not give the faintest notion, Zola's book sets forth, makes visible and palpable, and drives it like a nail into the brain, like a knife into the heart.

His own position is that of the rationalistic critic of a great outburst of irrationality and superstition. But, as Dr. Holmes said of Emerson that he took down the statues of the old gods from their pedestals with such tenderness that he seemed to be doing them a reverence, so is it with Zola here. For the sordidness, the grasping selfishness, of the fathers of the Immaculate Conception who are coining money by thousands and millions out of the ecstasy of Bernadette and the emotional insanity of the swarming multitudes he has some biting words; but for the sufferings and hopes of the pilgrims so grievously afflicted and tormented, so passionately in love with life and health, he has such a compassion as their all-powerful Mary, the mother of God, has not. For, if he could, he would heal them all in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. She, able to heal all, with strange capriciousness heals but a few. That she does heal a few Zola does not deny, or, rather, that a few are healed. As for the manner of their cure, that is another story. But, if some are cured,—a paralytic here, a consumptive there, elsewhere some strange deformity,—it is not strange that the believing multitude give Mary all the glory. They have not Zola's logical discrimination. Moreover, why should there not be miracles for the later as well as for the earlier Church? Protestants cut off the age of miracle sharply on the apostles' heels. But Roman Catholics have always been more wise. If miracles before Christ, they say,

why not miracles after him? And they declare that God has never left himself without a witness of this kind to suffering humanity. And thus they have for the Virgin of Lourdes a pedestal of granite, a true rock of ages, bearing her aloft. Centuries of miraculous experience swell the probability that, as God has been with the fathers, so will he be with us. Should you read Zola's book, I think you will agree with me that, considering his rationalistic temper, it is remarkable how little of the great development at Lourdes he attributes to trickery, to dishonesty. Trickery and dishonesty have their place and part; but, as compared with the sincere illusion of both priests and people, they are not, he would say, of much account. Moreover, he imagines that in this development, so pitiful, so tragical, he finds the sign and proof of a reaction from the rationalistic, scientific spirit of the time. This has plucked out the heart of God, and does not satisfy our own. This cannot sing,—I am rendering Zola's accusation,—this cannot sing,—

“Yes, for me, for *me*, he careth.”

It has no gospel for our individual hurt and pain, no happy confidence that God will heal our individual sickness,—bind up our broken heart, as if with his own hands. Zola admits the force of this lament. And still he says, “No backward step!” “The bitter heroism of science” is our only hope. But that it is very bitter he does not deny.

We will come back to this; but, in the first place, let us humiliate ourselves a little in the presence of this spectacle which is afforded by “Our Lady of Lourdes,” and the thousands, tens of thousands, who come yearly swarming to her blessed feet. We of the rational inclination, the liberal persuasion, are continually thinking and saying that this is the age of reason, the age of science. As Jesus in his mystic rapture saw Satan, like lightning, fall from heaven, so do we seem to see the power of superstition suddenly cast out and down. And in the midst of our congratulations behold the pilgrimage to Lourdes! For this phenomenon about which

M. Zola has written so powerfully is not something that happened five, six, seven hundred years ago. It is happening every year. It is a matter of to-day. The two hundred thousand or five hundred thousand pilgrims did not go afoot. They went by rail; and, besides the white train which carried the three hundred greatest sufferers, there was a blue train, and a gray train, and a yellow train, and a pink train, and so on,—thirteen other trains, named by the color of the tickets, all bound to Lourdes, loaded with sufferers and their friends, or those eager to take part in the miraculous occasion and see the triumph of the Virgin's glorious power. Not a mediæval business, but a matter of to-day,—“the supernatural in modern clothes.” The sufferers could telegraph to their distant friends. The healed could telephone to them: “I am cured!” “I am cured!” Was not M. Zola himself,—the incarnation of modernity,—there on the ground, going about with note-book in hand, seeing everything, and confessing some astonishing things? Renan, who wrote in his *Life of Jesus*, “A miracle never takes place in the presence of the scientific,” lived to see his neat epigram confuted by the fact that the sufferers bring to Lourdes the diagnosis of a medical conference, and after their cure submit themselves to the tests of a verification office, in which physicians by the score are invited to give an opinion. Here is something new, something of which Renan did not dream,—the supernatural with a scientific attachment, miracles confirmed by skilled professional examination before and after the event.

Is there not something here to abash the pride of reason, the conceit of science? It is true that the Chicago Exposition, a triumph of the modern spirit, had thousands of visitors, where the Lourdes grotto has its hundreds or its tens. But that offered a thousand various attractions, and the Lourdes grotto only one. Surely there is something in that grotto's blazing warmth — so many candles of the faithful burning there by night and day! — to “melt the freezing reason's colder part,” to dissolve our fond congratulations

on the prospect of a speedy triumph for our rationalistic principles all along the line. We begin to think that Macaulay was right in that oft-quoted passage prophesying the existence of the Roman Catholic Church in undiminished vigor "when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's." Sweep into one collection all the more rational developments of all the churches, and what a molehill are they to the mountainous irrationality of Christendom, both Catholic and Protestant! Moreover, we are invited to consider a certain reactionary tendency affecting men of culture and intelligence, whose affinities have been unmistakably with the rationalistic scientific tendencies of the age. Darwin's life and work meant nothing if they did not mean the extrusion of the supernatural,—the origin and development of species by natural selection, and not by special creation; and here comes a taking writer, fancying that natural selection is the key to social evolution, and also that the principal factor of this evolution is ultra-rational, supernatural religion, without whose sanction men will not subject their individual advantage to the common good. Of course, his book is hailed with tumult of acclaim. It is a Daniel come to judgment,—Benjamin Kidd also, a devotee of Darwin, among the prophets of irrational religion. Of course, all the supernaturalists have waved their handkerchiefs and thrown up their hats. But not these alone. Scratch a Russian, and you will find a Tartar: scratch a rationalist, and how soon you often come upon the sentimentalist, the reactionary, the supernaturalist! Even in Unitarian assemblies the eloquent speaker who appeals from thought to feeling, from reason to emotion, who calls upon them to abjure their rational birthright for a mess of sentimental pottage, is always sure of one of those audiences of which Emerson tells us there are several in every audience; and its plaudits are not always a minority report. There are other fingers pointing the same way,—to a certain weariness with the slow methods of

science, and its inadequate results. How often do we find some rationalist who has "sent the schools to school," going the whole length of negation, and then tumbling over into an abyss of sheer credulity, or wallowing in some Serbonian bog of Christian Science or Theosophy, in which armies whole have sunk! Who can discern the signs of the times as they present themselves at Lourdes, and often in the bosom of our Protestant societies, and not feel at least a momentary terror lest a great tide of irrationality and credulity and superstition should even now come rolling in upon us, rolling back the tide of rational science for another thousand years? But it is only for a moment. Or rather, I would say, the longer and the closer we look all these things in the face, the more surely we shall be convinced that our salvation cometh not from thence. "The bitter heroism of science" is a more excellent way,—would be, if the alternative were that. But it may be something better than this drastic phrase denotes.

Zola's great novel, or great psychological study, represents, apparently, the appeal of human misery from science to an ultra-rational religion. It is immensely suggestive in a hundred ways,—in one way which has not impressed our novelist as I think it should have done. It presents this startling paradox: it is a tremendous testimony to the unreality of the traditional religion. *That* has invariably taught us that to depart and be with Christ is better than to remain alive. There is nothing more beautiful in the new Life of Frances Power Cobbe than her story of Lord Shaftesbury, the great Evangelical leader, saying, in contemplation of his death, "I hope it is not wrong to say it, but I cannot bear to leave the world with all the misery there is in it." What a noble accusation of his inherited creed! and, at the same time, what a confession that, "I hope it is not wrong to say it," of the traditional import of that creed,—that it is better to depart and be with Christ than to remain alive. Such is not the opinion of the suffering multitudes who flock to Lourdes by thousands every year.

"'Tis life whereof their nerves are scant,
O life, not death, for which they pant;
More life, and fuller, that they want."

They have no eagerness to exchange the life which now is for that which is to come. They would rather suffer here than join the innumerable caravan that moves to the imagined height of bliss. The love of life, the love of health,—this is the recurrent note of "*Lourdes*," the book, the thing itself. It is the cry for these that drowns the "*Aves*" and the "*Glorias*," that sounds through all the litanies of agonized appeal to Mary and her Son. And so I cannot think that I misreckon when I say that *Lourdes* is a tremendous testimony to the unreality of the traditional preference for another life to this. At *Lourdes* we have the ultra-rational religion of our last social theorist* confessing its sins, abjuring one of the most characteristic articles of its traditional creed.

But it is not only the pessimism of the supernaturalist dogma, it is also the pessimism of the modern theorist and sentimentalist that is condemned by that great cry of the impassioned multitude at *Lourdes*, and by the world-wide plaint with which it blends,—"*O Lord, heal our sick!*" This is a testimony not only to men's conviction that life is good, but to the truth of their conviction. It is good science. I believe that it is happiness that builds the structure of all animal and human life; that, were not happiness in the ascendant, life would rush to its extinction very fast. And I cannot see why it is not equally good science that the ascendancy of happiness, the good of life, reports itself in the universal song,—

"'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant,
O life, not death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller, that we want."

It is the good of life that makes men love it, that makes them cling to it even when it is full of hurt and pain. This

* Benjamin Kidd.

love of life, this clinging to it,—even when it does not seem worth living from the observer's point of view,—this is a result of natural selection. It has been selected by the average conditions of existence. If misery were preponderant, the motley of the Donatist would be the only wear. Books for the encouragement of suicide would be superfluous. All would raise that deadly nightshade without philosophical encouragement; for all would have abundance of the seed. But, as it is, the consciousness of the beauty, goodness, and the joy of life, is such a mighty flood that it not only fills the ocean basin of men's average condition, but makes up and overflows into the lives that are empty of all health and joy; and they re-echo something of the music of that happy and rejoicing ocean of delight which sings, "How beautiful it is to be alive!"

But do not such occurrences as those at Lourdes oblige us to accept the ultra-rational, supernatural idea of religion, at least so far as to confess the presence of a Power behind nature that can rend the heavens and come down and address itself to private needs? When a critic of those occurrences so clearly rationalistic and scientific as M. Zola confesses the reality of certain cures, and these, too, of diseases that have put the skill of the physicians to an open shame, what remains for us but to accept the miraculous interpretation? Much, every way. The boundless possibilities of the human organism within the range of its extraordinary manifestations remain to give us pause. The assumption of the miraculous always rests upon the prior assumption that we have discovered all there is in human nature, and that what our present knowledge does not account for must be from beyond the boundaries of natural law. But we are learning every day that our knowledge of human nature is about equivalent to Benjamin Franklin's knowledge of electricity when he flew his famous kite. The imagined miracle is but another door that opens on some wider view of natural possibilities. While the fire of supernaturalism burns up at Lourdes so fiercely,—and no wonder!—the scientific anatomist and

physiologist has been musing in the laboratories of Paris and London and New York, and he has discovered that the range of nervous cause and implication in the diseases of mankind is much wider than has been heretofore conceived; that nothing is more paralyzing than an hysterical imagination; and that the range of functional disturbance, whether of locomotion or nutrition, which has a purely nervous character, is practically unlimited. Hence a new homœopathy,—the conception that what has a nervous cause may or must have a nervous cure; that not medication, but some nervous shock, some thrill of the imagination, is necessary to bring back the vital currents to their normal flow. The studies of hypnotic phenomena are convincing that the seat of the most baffling diseases is in the imagination and the will, and that these must somehow be reached in order to effect a cure. What if the cures of Lourdes's miraculous grotto might all be resolved into this order of relations? What if all of them cannot be so resolved, nor one in ten? There is a day after to-day. The continent of human nature is still unexplored. As yet we are acquainted with about so much of it as the European voyagers and explorers knew of our North American continent three centuries ago, the merest fringe along the Atlantic coast. Forever memorable on this head is Huxley's illustration of the day-fly and the thunder-storm. The fly which lives but for a day, he tells us, has a better reason to think a thunder-storm miraculous than we have to think anything so that transcends, or can transcend, our uniform experience,—even a Lourdes consumptive dancing like a fawn, or a paralytic leaping like the roe.

We only wish to know the facts involved in any order of phenomena, so that we may adjust ourselves to them as best we can. And yet we cannot but be glad that the advance of medical science permits us to refuse the supernatural interpretation, and that a just appreciation of the significance of natural law compels us to make this refusal. A strange conclusion, do you say, seeing that it is so contrary to that of the whole body of believers who, at Lourdes, make their appeal

from science and reason to miracle and God, and cherish as a comforting assurance the conviction that their appeal is not in vain? But, then, a moment's thought rings clear the passing knell of the idea that in such occurrences as those at Lourdes, regarded as miraculous, we have something favorable to religion, to our human trust in God. *If one miraculously cured, then why not all?* This is the thunder-stone that shatters the illusion that in miraculous interference we have something favorable to religion and to the almighty love. If one miraculously cured, then why not all? Why thousands going on that ghastly pilgrimage, tortured with alternating hope and fear, even more than by the horrors of the journey and their racking pains, and all of them except a pitiful minority sent back with hope deferred to take up again the burden of their woe, or lie crushed and uncomplaining or rebellious under its awful weight? Or why, if all were cured, this monstrous inequality of fortune that opens in Southern France a fount of healing, and opens none in Northern France accessible to the sufferers in that vicinity, none in Germany, none in England, none in America? It is far from Omaha and Santa Barbara and Tacoma to the Pyrenean grotto, and the expense of going there is prohibitory for people of small means. Yet these places also have their sufferers, their incurables, who still long for life and health, and do not long to die. If one, then why not all? Ay, more, why not that ounce of prevention which is worth a pound of cure? Why, if God works in these miraculous ways, any permission of that enormous and heart-breaking catalogue of ills which so afflicts humanity from age to age? For God's sake,—yes, just exactly, literally, that,—*for God's sake*, no miracles!

“If there is doom for one,
Thou, Maker, art undone!”

on this miraculous ground. This that so many want, to which they appeal from reason and science,—this would be of all things the most fatal to God's goodness, to his justice,

to his mercy, to men's love for him, honor for him, respect for him. No miracles, unless you would have the miserable, forsaken sufferer curse God and die! The few elect might chant the praises of a miraculous God: "The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and of great mercy." But how about those on whom he has no mercy, and the millions who have hearts to sympathize with their sufferings and their protest against Heaven's immeasurable caprice, unspeakable indifference, intolerable injustice? For God's sake, no miracles!

Those who believe in reason and in science as the guides whom we may trust to lead us to some life of larger scope may safely challenge those who put their trust in ultra-rational religion to a comparison of the relative advantages of the rival systems. Even if reason could be held responsible for the modern pessimism of philosophy and art and pampered idleness, what would it be compared with the pessimism of the traditional theology? I know of nothing more ridiculous than the holy horror of our modern Orthodoxy contemplating the appalling spectacle of such a pessimism as that of Schopenhauer or Hartmann or Huxley. Why, bless your soul, one hour of Boston's "Fourfold State" or Jonathan Edwards's "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" would be more intolerable than a lifetime of the most intolerable conditions that the imagination of a Schopenhauer could conceive. But hold! The theology of modern Orthodoxy is not that of Edwards and of Boston's "Fourfold State." No, it is not. Let us thank God, and take courage. But why is it not? Because of the impact of reason and science on the theology of Edwards and Boston. That very comfort of religion upon which modern Orthodoxy plumes itself so much is, to a very great degree, the product of that rationalistic temper which it repudiates as inimical to religious hope and cheer. Reason has drawn the fangs of the traditional theology. It has eliminated those elements of its teaching which were shocking to the mind and heart and paralyzing to the will. In Lecky's History of Eng-

land he gives great praise and glory to the Methodist revival of the last century, because its comforting assurances "could make a dying bed softer than downy pillows are." But it was the same revival that excited the intolerable apprehensions that its ministers endeavored to allay. There have been no miseries of the human mind like those excited by an irrational theology. Great is Science, and greatly to be praised, if for nothing more than for the disgrace and ruin of the monstrous devilry of Calvin's creed. If Atheism were her doctrine, as we are so frequently assured, even this would be good tidings in comparison with the tidings of the traditional scheme of salvation. Better an absolute blank than that the infinite space of the imagination should be made ghastly and hideous with such a shape as that which has too long scared the poor, trembling hearts of ignorant and superstitious men!

It is not only as embodied in the formal teachings of the traditional theology that the old demoniacal terrors have been exorcised by reason and science. Those teachings have been paralleled at all times with a correlated growth of superstitions that have been poison to man's blood and brain. Hence every harsher natural phenomenon has been regarded as the angry outburst of an offended God. The survivals of such notions still linger in our Unitarian hymn-books, and our Unitarian congregations still sing them with a childlike and bland unconsciousness of any incongruity. For example,

"His chariots of wrath the deep thunder-clouds form."

I remember that we came on that not long ago in Brooklyn, when the thunder-clouds big with mercy had just broken in blessing on our heads after the long, long drouth, and our hearts were full of gratitude and joy in the event. We left that stanza out. It is true the earthquake still shakes our towns from their propriety, the cyclone ravages our farms, the ocean storm destroys the big white cruiser and the quiet fleet; but the gain is quite appreciable which deducts from

all these things—sad and bad enough in their unqualified reality—the theological increment of an offended deity punishing his people for sins of which they are not well aware, and including innocent and guilty in the common doom.

But we are told that we need the sanction of an ultra-rational religion for morality, for that altruism which pleases not itself, but sacrifices itself upon the altar of the common good. Such is the doctrine of that, yesterday unknown, now famous, writer whose name is Benjamin Kidd, as he sails, as he sails, flying the flag of natural selection at his main peak, and the flag of ultra-rational religion at the fore. But what else is chargeable with so much of “man’s inhumanity to man” as this same ultra-rational religion? The assurance of a religion with supernatural or ultra sanctions has been the main support and inspiration of religious persecution, and by that sign it has been the cause of quite incalculable unaltruistic, unfraternal sentiments and acts. Who does not know John Stuart Mill’s terrible indictment of Nature for her treatment of humanity? but what tyro in religious history does not know that the particulars of that indictment can be paralleled and exceeded by the horrors which the supernatural religionist has inflicted on his brother men? If there be one such, let him go, not to Colonel Ingersoll, but to Dr. Hedge, a devout enthusiast for religion, and there read: “No agent that has wrought in earthly scenes has been more prolific of ruin and wrong. The wildest aberrations of human nature, crimes the most portentous, the most desolating wars, persecutions, wrath, and bloodshed, more than have flowed from all other sources beside, have been its fruits.

‘Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum,’—

So much wickedness has religion been able to incite,—and for no other reason so much as because of the supernatural sanction that has been invoked. Lecky’s History of Rationalism in Europe is a book which is not a back number yet,

and it teaches nothing if it does not teach that altruism in politics, in charity, in industry and everywhere in social life, has advanced *pari passu* with the march of rational conceptions of the world. Was not Garrison an intense supernaturalist until the opposition of supernatural Orthodoxy to his glorious cause made him a heretic, going outside the camp with Theodore Parker, and sharing his reproach? Did not James G. Birney, himself soundly orthodox, brand the supernaturalist churches of America as "the bulwark of slavery"? But the anti-supernaturalists, Parker and Higginson and Johnson and Longfellow and Weiss and Frothingham and Potter,—theirs was no trembling of the tongue.

In none of these considerations—and they might be multiplied indefinitely—do we find any cause to follow where they lead who have sounded a retreat on supernatural religion. But some will say, "Be these things as they may, they cannot blind us to the facts of human misery." These are the facts which constitute as do no others the pity and the terror of M. Zola's book, with which I began, and to which I now return. Abandoned by science, he would say, these miserable creatures have appealed to miracle, to God. And we may not disguise the fact that Science is continually, after all these centuries of study and investigation, obliged to confess her impotence. She can sometimes allay the misery. She cannot fathom it or work its cure. And if, when it comes to this, the irrational forces of the imagination welcome the sufferer at Lourdes or elsewhere, and he hastens to precipitate himself on their embrace, and, lying there, feels the strong tides of life and health come pulsing back into the channels dry of their gracious course for many a month and year, have we not here a summons to let science go, bid reason, too, farewell, and make the irrational forces, call them what you will, our buttress and our tower against the invasion of life's various misery and pain? Do not believe it. It was Faraday, the chemist, who first made known the properties of sulphuric ether,—knowledge

which has been utilized to still a million agonizing pains, and lap the sufferer in sweet oblivion what time the surgeon's skill has battled for his maimed or wasting life. "I am come that ye may have life," said Jesus, "and that ye may have it more abundantly." The function of science could not be described more perfectly. Not only has it abated infinitely the ills that flesh is heir to, but the more subtle ailments of the mind. Science *can* sometimes

"Minister to a mind diseased,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart."

The record which it shows, with all its imperfections, is in this respect very different from that of the ultra-rational creed. For this has been a fruitful mother of insanities. Its horrible imaginations have disturbed the balance of a million gentle minds. Where the old Orthodoxy reaps, the lunatic asylum gleans. But Religion formerly essayed to treat the evils of which she was the most prolific cause; and her remedies were worse than the disease. This she esteemed the work of devils; and, to exorcise them, she practised such cruelties upon the imagined victims of their spells as we cannot think of without a bursting heart. If Science had no other gospel than that which she has preached for the insane and imbecile, where could you find in the record of ultra-rational religions anything of healing efficacy half so sweet and fair?

These are examples that could be multiplied a hundred-fold, but I forbear. Grant the incompetence of science to deal with many forms of suffering, and still, if every miracle recorded could be verified, the record would not be one volume to the libraries of the world as compared with the competency of science, while all her victories and defeats are only stepping-stones to higher things. Give her time enough,—not very much,—and she will explain the so-

called miracles of Lourdes, and include the secret of their transformations in the therapeutics that she practises from day to day. Not the despair of science, but an ever-widening, deepening confidence in her methods and her spirit is the lesson of the hour, the order for the day.

“Not backward are our glances bent,
But onward to our Father’s home,”—

a home wherein our wearied thought may rest itself like a tired child upon its mother’s breast.

But is there such a home? Is the appeal to science also an appeal to God? Better no God at all than one having mercy on whom he will have mercy and thrusting back another into the depth of his despair. But the collapse and failure of the God of miracle do not necessarily imply the establishment of the God of science. Ultra-rational religion may be utterly discredited by rational religion; but rational religion does not conquer by this sign alone. I will ask you to recall the saying of John Stuart Mill: “I will call no being good who is not what I mean when I apply that word to my fellow-creatures.” How often have our hearts leaped up to that, and to what follows it, as never theirs who heard the Corybantic mysteries! And yet think of the things which God, or that great Power which moves the world, is doing all the time. Think of that white train, rolling along from Paris to Lourdes, with its three hundred sufferers. Nay, think of the round earth forever rolling,—whither?—with its three million sufferers,—how many more?—and of these multiplied by years and centuries! Can we call the being good who does such things as these? Would we call our fellow-beings so if they did such things, when they might not do them,—if they caused such sufferings, when they might cause for every pang a thrill of joy? You know that we would not. What then? Are we without God in the world? Yes, if God is but a great non-natural man,—if his thoughts are our thoughts, and his ways our ways; if, *being God*, he can at any time break through the ordered sequence of his world with force of arbitrary will.

In these last days it is the pity of humanity that accuses God. It is the increasing sensibility to the sufferings of animal and human life that makes it hard to reconcile these sufferings with the goodness of the Almighty Power. When men were infinitely cruel, they did not balk at the idea of an infinitely cruel God. But it is different now; and now, as I have said, it is the pity of humanity that accuses God. Human pity — sweet, tender, human pity — is making more atheists in the modern world than all the Bradlaughs and the Ingersolls, and such as they. And it will go on working this mischief and this misery until we come unto that mount of vision whence we can descry that God is not a great non-natural man, and is not to be measured by the standards of our private good and ill; that, in the working out of his eternal purposes, he may be God-compelled to do a thousand things which to our human seeming are but dark and strange. Yet can we see a little way. We can see that tragedy is the nurse of genius and success; that it is the power of God unto salvation from the flabbiness and imbecility of a race living without struggle, without resistance, without pain, without agony and blinding sweat and burning tears. We can see that suffering is inseparable from man's finite nature and a finite world, that "either nothing on no terms at all or the universe on these terms" is the unalterable fact; and we may think that, on the whole, we prefer the universe on these terms. If we do not, no matter: here it is. We can see that, even as on a field of battle fairest flowers spring up out of the carnage and the wreck, so is it with the field of life, the scene of that great battle which humanity is fighting for its crown. What flowers of tenderness and sweet compassion spring from the wreck and carnage of this field forever rolled in smoke! This also we can see, which is the best of all, that God is ever greater than our hearts. Wherefore, our pity does not accuse his goodness, but it is a pledge that in his infinite heart there is a great ocean of pity which forever overflows to freshen with its inundation sweet the barren and waste places of the

world until the things most harsh and terrible show the white blossom of eternal peace. And so it happens that "the bitter heroism of science" is not our only hope and stay. The heroism of science? Yes: relentlessly pushing toward the fact, certain that every fact discovered is so much more of God, and with our human pity "remembering those whom he seems to have forgotten," but has not, using every fact for the alleviation of the misery of the world, for the strengthening of its health, for the enlargement of its peace and joy, making ourselves the pity and the tenderness of God to crushed and bleeding hearts. So steadfast in our search, taking no backward step, doing the duty nearest to us with a firm and quiet hand, there shall arise on us from day to day the vision of an ever grander God, yet one whose goodness and whose love shall flow around his greatness as the ocean currents flow around the islands of the sea.

"O Power more near my life than life itself,
I fear not thy withdrawal: more I fear
Seeing to know thee not, hoodwinked with dreams
Of signs and wonders, while, unnoticed, Thou,
Walking Thy garden still, commun'st with men,
Missed in the commonplace of miracle."

A PASTORAL LETTER.

I INVITE your attention this morning to some thoughts suggested by the Pastoral Letter of the House of Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church to the Clergy and Laity of that Church. I do not, I think, exaggerate the importance of this matter. It is not because I conceive it to be of very great importance that I have made it the subject of my discourse. But it has intellectual and moral implications which are deserving of some careful thought. And then, too, we are bound, I think, to take a healthy interest in the thought and action of all those religious bodies which constitute the Christian community at the present time, welcoming and applauding every forward step, recognizing the good works they are doing, and which sometimes shame our duller pace, and, where the tendency appears to us irrational or retrogressive, bringing to that as frank a temper as to the better things. I am in no danger of coming to this letter in any such awe-struck manner as that of the religious paper which is the principal organ of the American Episcopal Church. I have read nothing in the comic papers for many a day so amusing as the *Churchman's* editorial. "It is hardly possible," it says, "to exaggerate the importance of the Pastoral. . . . It is, perhaps, the most weighty utterance which has ever been made to the clergy and laity of the Church by their right reverend fathers in God." These are good mouth-filling words; but they pale in the light of the assumption sublime of other expressions in the same editorial, such as, "The American Church is alone capable of uttering an authoritative encyclical of such a character." The American Church! Phillips Brooks is

dead, and there is no one now to blast as he did with the lightning of his scorn the arrogant absurdity and imbecility of this claim; but how refreshing is the memory of his manly words! If there is a church in the United States which cannot, without violating history and common sense and decency, call itself the American Church, it is the Protestant Episcopal. Through the entire colonial period it was an exotic which no fostering care could nurse into the semblance even of a vigorous and healthy life. Consult no hostile critic, but go for the history of this period to Dr. S. D. McConnell, a devoted Churchman, and you will find that, where the Church was strongest in point of numbers, it was weakest in point of morals. The characters of the clergy, says Dr. McConnell, were more doubtful than their orders. They hunted, played cards,* drank punch and canary, turned marriages, christenings, and funerals alike into revels. One bawled out to his church warden at the Holy Communion, "Here, George, this bread is not fit for a dog." One fought a duel in his own graveyard. Another, a powerful fellow, thrashed his vestrymen one by one, and the Sunday following preached before them from the text, "And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair." Another dined every Sunday with his chief parishioner, and was sent home in the evening drunk, tied in his chaise."† Nothing became these fellows more than their attitude in the Revolutionary War. They were subjected to every possible indignity. But, as Churchmen, they were officers of the English government; and they proved their loyalty in the face of the most cruel opposition. All this was right and good; but it was not a line of conduct that suggests the propriety of their being called at that time "the American Church." Before the war the Church had no bishop on this side of the Atlantic. The first after the war, Seabury, of Connecticut, whose was a left-handed Scotch consecration, had

* For money, should be understood.

† "History of the American Episcopal Church," S. D. McConnell, D.D., p. 90.

been a Tory chaplain; and, as a bishop, he enjoyed the half-pay of a British officer as long as he lived. In the anti-slavery conflict, if the trumpet of this Church gave no uncertain sound, it was because it gave none whatever. When the war was over, and one of the noblest laymen of the Church moved in convention that with the thanks of the Church for peace should be included thanks that slavery, the cause of the war, had been destroyed, the motion was buried under an adverse majority. Since then there have been bishops, like Brooks and Huntington and Potter, actuated by the best American spirit, devoted to everything that is honorable in our politics and our social life; and there have been laymen generously responding to their leadership. But, if such things entitled the Protestant Episcopal to call itself the American Church, the Presbyterian Church would have as good a claim, and the Congregationalist and the Baptist and the Methodist, and even our own Unitarian.

So amusing is the *Churchman's* comment on the Pastoral Letter that I am tempted to continue my quotations. The English language is not rich enough to express its sense of its importance, and it resorts to Latin: *Ecclesia locuta est: causa finita est*,—which, for the benefit of the unlearned, it translates, “The Church has spoken through its rulers, through those to whom especially the deposit of Scriptural truth has been committed; and the matter is set at rest forever.” But I must restrain myself in this direction, or I shall have no time and space for the consideration of the Letter itself, which is a matter of much more importance than the ecstatic commendation of the denominational organ. The object of the Letter is plainly set forth in its first paragraph. It is “in view of certain novelties of opinion and expression,” which “have seemed to be subversive of the fundamental verities of Christ’s religion,” to “simply and plainly set forth the truth of God, which every minister of the Episcopal Church has pledged himself to hold, teach, and defend, and hand on unimpaired.” The bishops who

have prepared and sent forth the Letter were appointed to this function last October by an Episcopal council meeting in the city of New York. They are six in number; and a private letter from the presiding bishop, Williams, of Connecticut, informs us that each sent in his contribution, and then a conglomerate was made of the different contributions, and sent to each bishop for his approval. Such information is superfluous, because the dullest reader could easily infer its substance from the Pastoral itself. It is evidently the work of several hands, some of them much more skilful than others. Some passages have a noble resonance, and others are duller than a leaden bell,—in part, no doubt, because they are “made up of quotations,” as the good woman said of “Hamlet” at the play. Then, too, where one writer speaks of “the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews,” and another (as it appears) speaks of “the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews,” we seem to have degrees of critical sincerity; for it can hardly be that any of these bishops does not know that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by no apostle. It was generally discredited in the early Church, and the modern doubts began with Luther and Calvin. To-day it would be impossible to find a scholar of the slightest reputation who accepts the Epistle as Pauline; but either one, at least, of these great ecclesiastics does not know this, and the others have hesitated to enlighten him, or they are all agreed that, however “devoutly” they may “thank God for the light and truth which have come to us through the earnest labors of devout critics of the sacred text,” it is just as well in a document of this sort to revert to the traditional opinion. There are other particulars in which it is impossible to conceive that the judgment and the scholarship of all the bishops concerned are represented by what is written. What we have here is probably a flagrant instance of that “signing in the plural,” as it is called, whereby men formally assent to general statements containing various particulars at which they privately demur.

After some introductory matter the Letter proceeds “to

state what the Church requires all who minister in holy things to hold and teach, first concerning the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and secondly concerning the Holy Scriptures." Now, you are all aware that of late years the doctrine of the incarnation, which means in-flesh-ment, has been developed by many writers and preachers of the evangelical churches in such a large and splendid way that it has been made attractive to a great many people who could not accept the traditional belief upon this head. Some of these writers and preachers have taught that, in some very special way, the spirit of divine wisdom and goodness was present in the mind and heart of Jesus; others, that it was present in him in a remarkable degree forever unattainable by other men; still others (like Dr. Lyman Abbott), that, however remarkable the degree, it is *attainable* by other men,—though never yet *attained* by any! Now, it is not, you may be sure, to build a defensive wall around any of these adumbrations of the doctrine that our six bishops have put their heads together. They show very plainly—and they have earned our gratitude in doing so—that the doctrine of the incarnation in the creeds and articles and services and collects of their Church is the doctrine that Jesus Christ was "conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary"; and their inference is unavoidable that no one who does not accept and teach the doctrine of the incarnation in this sense has a clear right to be a priest of their Church, or can, as a layman, be more than an excrescence on its body, unassimilated and unassimilable so long as he is of this doubtful or dissenting mind.

The bishops assure us that they "have not undertaken to discuss these great doctrinal questions"; but they have, to some extent, developed an argument from Scripture for the incarnation, as by them and the Church conceived, and a further argument on more general grounds. The latter is that with the virgin-birth of Jesus is bound up the entire traditional scheme of salvation. Take this away, and we have no total depravity left. "For," I quote the Letter,

“the miraculous virgin-birth, while it is alone befitting to God, in assuming our nature into personal union with himself, marks off and separates the whole of our humanity as tainted by that very corruption of original sin, which had no place in human nature, as that nature was assumed by our Blessed Lord in his incarnation.” That is to say, the virgin-birth of Jesus attests the baseness of all natural generation, and confirms the innate depravity of all men born of this. How it was that Jesus got no original sin from his mother we are not informed. The Roman Catholics are more logical. Hence their doctrine of the immaculate conception, which means that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was born without original sin. The next logical step would seem to be to the immaculate conception of Anne, the mother of Mary; and to this we may confidently expect the Roman Catholic hierarchy to proceed. But let no one, identifying himself with the Episcopal Church, forget that the doctrine of the incarnation which it teaches brands every lawful marriage as impure, and “marks off the whole of our humanity as tainted by the corruption of original sin.”

The Scriptural argument for this doctrine of the incarnation is more remarkable for what it cautiously withholds than for what it diligently sets forth. But what it sets forth has many interesting features. The first quotation is from “the Apostle writing to the Ephesians,” one of the most doubtfully genuine of all the Epistles ascribed to Paul, as our bishops must well know; and their second quotation is from the Second Epistle of John, so called, the authenticity of which is questioned by as “devout critics of the sacred text” as ever bent themselves to understand it without a predilection for anything but the simple truth. The Old Testament passages quoted as prophetic, and therefore demonstrative of the virgin-birth of Jesus, are grossly insulting to the intelligence of every Biblical scholar; and we are almost compelled to think that so great was the modesty of the bishops that they took for granted that no scholar would read what they had written. How can we otherwise account for such

quotations as "the seed of the woman," "A woman shall compass a man," and "Behold, a virgin shall conceive"? What tyro in these matters does not know that the serpent in Genesis is not Satanic,* and that the prophecy of his enmity with "the seed of the woman" is merely a prophecy of the dislike of mankind in general for snakes; that "A woman shall compass a man" means that she shall be able to protect him, so sweet shall be the reign of peace; and that in the passage "Behold, a virgin shall conceive," etc., "virgin" means simply "young woman," and the reference is to an immediate present? Further along in their Letter the bishops assure us that they "devoutly thank God for the light and truth which a devout criticism has revealed." But in these interpretations we find them repudiating its most elementary teachings, and serving up instead of these the most hopelessly stale and utterly discredited of all the Old Testament predictions that have had a meaning forced upon them wholly foreign to their original significance.

I have said that their Scriptural argument is more remarkable for what it cautiously withholds than for what it diligently sets forth. What I mean by this is that there are "plain statements" of the New Testament which are absolutely at variance with the doctrine of the virgin-birth of Jesus. His genealogy both in *Matthew* and *Luke* is derived through Joseph; and this phenomenon is conclusive evidence that these genealogies were the invention of a time when the virgin-birth of Jesus was an unheard of fable. In the second century the incongruity was seen to be so glaring that the Davidic genealogy of Jesus was traced through Mary. Evidently, the original exaltation of Jesus took no trouble to explain the *manner* of the divine indwelling. Paul's "born of a woman" clearly points to natural generation. But after the daring speculators, Paul and the writers of *Colossians* and *Ephesians* and *Hebrews*, came the literalists, who must know *how* God was incarnated in Jesus, and in answer

* Nor anywhere in the Old Testament. For the first time in the apocryphal *Wisdom of Solomon* ii. 24.

to their demand came the pictorially beautiful and morally repulsive legends of the virgin-birth. And, certainly, it is not strange that many persons, blest or cursed with an inquiring mind, cannot assimilate to the virgin-birth the genealogies of Matthew and Luke. It would seem as if the bishops ought to have shown these anxious and troubled spirits how the Davidic line of Jesus through Joseph comports with their assertion that "the humanity in his one person is wholly derived from the substance of the blessed Virgin Mary."

It was Sir Thomas Browne's conviction that "there are not impossibilities enough in religion for the exercise of an active faith." But the bishops in their Pastoral Letter have done their best to satisfy this intellectual demand. The doctrine of the incarnation, they assure us, includes and involves the whole circle of traditional beliefs pertaining to the life and death of Jesus. Chief among these they place his resurrection and his ascension into heaven with "his body, flesh and bones, and all things pertaining to the perfection of man's nature." That Paul is cited as a witness to these things indicates the astonishing critical looseness of the thought; for it is evident that Paul believed that Jesus was "raised a spiritual body," as he expected all the faithful dead to be. As such he had seen him in his vision, an experience which, apparently, he considered similar to that of James and the apostles and the five hundred brethren who had seen him at once. This teaching, we are told, the Church "does not tolerate"; but it is no new thing for Saint Paul to be intolerable to the orthodox party.

Between that part of the Letter which concerns the incarnation, together with the other doctrines which it is said to involve, and the concluding part, which deals with the inspiration of the Bible, we have a very interesting disquisition on the nature of creeds and formulas. "The creeds of the Catholic Church do not," we are told, "represent the contemporaneous thought of any age. They declare eternal truths, telling what God has taught man and done for

man rather than what man has thought out for himself about God." Here is a claim for the creeds as exorbitant as any that has ever been made for the Bible ; and how it was possible for the more intelligent and enlightened of the bishops to set their names to such a claim no one who knows the history of the three great creeds—the Nicene, the Apostles', and the Athanasian—will find it easy to conceive. Of the Athanasian, so called, I will not speak, because American Episcopalians discarded it a century ago.* It is a creed for which Athanasius was not responsible, and which, unheard of in the Eastern Church for seven centuries after his time, obtained currency in the Western late in the eighth or early in the ninth century. The Nicene Creed, as we now have it, is not exactly the creed adopted at Nicæa in 325 A.D. Variouslly tampered with from time to time, its Western form is different from the Eastern in a particular of first-rate importance. But, if it had come down exactly in its original form, could anything be more preposterous than to claim for it a divine origin as distinct from "what man has thought out for himself about God." We know the history of its adoption ; and we know that a political platform of to-day, the war-cry of a triumphant faction in a political convention, is not more obviously the outcome of human elements of thought and passion than was the Nicene Creed. As for the Apostles' Creed, the Episcopalian layman takes it reverently upon his lips as a formula of the apostolic time. It is an interesting fact that the first near approach to it we have is quoted from Marcellus of Ancyra, a bishop who had been deposed for heresy in 336 A.D. It was not until the middle of the eighth century that it assumed its final form, and attained to general acceptance in the Church. And now we have this creed of uncertain origin, its phrases drifting together on the swirling currents of eight hundred years, commended to us as "stamped with the assurance which divine infallibility gives." *O sancta simplicitas !*—or something else.

* When they were much more liberally inclined than they are now.

Not only are the ancient creeds to be accepted as infallible, but they are to be accepted in exactly their original sense. "Grave peril to souls," we are assured, "lies in the acceptance of the letter of the Creeds in any other sense than the plain and definitely historical sense in which they have been interpreted by the consentient voice of the Church in all ages. Fixedness of interpretation is of the essence of the Creeds, whether we view them as statements of facts, or as dogmatic truths founded upon and deduced from these facts, and once for all determined by the operation of the Holy Ghost upon the mind of the Church." Now, we shall all, I think, agree with these representations, so far as they are a criticism on the habit, frightfully common, of formal acceptance of the creeds, together with the private understanding and resolve that they shall mean anything that they can be made to mean, anything necessary to conform them to the rational and scientific or particular individual mind. As between the bishops and those who take up with this sleight-of-hand, we are, I think, clearly with the former. But, if the bishops mean to insist that there is a single meaning of the creeds which can be equally and identically apprehended by all concerned, they would do well to betake themselves to the Right Hon. Mr. Balfour's new book, "*The Foundations of Belief*"; to the chapter on "Beliefs, Formularies, and Realities." There the conclusion is carefully worked out that we can no more believe exactly what other people believe than we can feel exactly what other people feel. Outside of mathematics the same words convey different ideas to different minds. "That uniformity of conviction which so many have striven to attain for themselves, and to impose on their fellows, is an insubstantial phantasm, born of a confusion between language and the thought which language so imperfectly expresses. In this world, at least, we are doomed to differ in even the cases where we most agree." These considerations are with Mr. Balfour an argument for the acceptance of common formulas, with the express understanding that they may mean pretty much anything you

please. But some are sure to find in them an argument for the reduction of all common formulas to the lowest terms, aware that even then they will not mean the same things to all persons, and therefore, as we did at Saratoga, refusing to make them an exclusive test of fellowship.

From their assertion of the fixed meaning and infallibility of the historic creeds the bishops pass to the consideration of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. And here let it be noticed gratefully that the doctrine of inspiration which they set forth is something less vigorous and rigorous than that of the Orthodoxy of some sixty, fifty, forty years ago. It is not the inspiration of verbal infallibility. It is admitted that in the Bible, around the inviolable domain of faith, there is "a borderland" in which "thinking minds will appreciate and reverently and conscientiously use the freedom which is accorded them." Moreover, we are informed that it was the men, and not the books, that were inspired,—a position which was a miserable heresy less than fifty years ago, and which does not well agree with the Declaration for Orders which commands every minister to teach that "the Holy Scriptures [do not merely contain, but] *are* the word of God." What is insisted on is that the Bible contains "all things necessary to salvation," and that it is "a final revelation of God to man." The one thing about this part of the Letter which is perfectly clear is that it is not clear in its discriminations. A faithful scholar might honestly endeavor to shape his course by them, and soon find himself in trouble. "The minute and reverent study of the Divine Word," we are told, "is always necessary, and will always be profitable." But such minute and reverent study will infallibly produce the conviction that the doctrine of the Trinity is nowhere taught in the Bible. Is this, then, not "necessary to salvation"? We are told that it can be inferred from certain passages. But is it not a strange, incomprehensible revelation of infallible truth which is not explicit on a matter of so much importance?

As with the Trinity, so with the Deity of Christ. Certainly,

there are some passages that come very near to it ; but these are in documents of whose personal origin no scholar of unbiassed mind will dare imagine himself sure, and for every one of these passages there are scores that subordinate Jesus to God or assign him to the ranks of our humanity. As for the doctrine that "it is the men who are inspired, and not primarily the book," who *are* the men? In the Old Testament and New there are sixty-six books. Twenty-three of these — no more, we have good reason to believe — were written by the men to whom they have been traditionally ascribed. What becomes of the inspiration of the men in the case of the other forty-three? And, as for the twenty-three books whose authenticity has not been impeached, what do we know of the authors for the most part that can justify us in ascribing to them infallible inspiration? What do we know of Nahum? Nothing. What of Obadiah, Zephaniah, Joel, Malachi? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. It would seem, then, that, as between the authors and the books, the latter are the better vehicles of inspiration. We know something of them. But we know nothing of them that permits us to set them apart from the best literature of the world, beyond their scope as specially, not to say infallibly, inspired. All that we know about them makes it simply wicked for us to make any such distinction. For by this time we know a good deal about the natural history of the Bible, the formation of the Canon. In the case of the Old Testament we know that this was a process covering some six or seven hundred years. We seek in vain for any supernatural hand stretched out to guide its course. We see books and parts of books ascribed to men who could not possibly have written them, who had been dead hundreds of years before they saw the light. We see some admitted to the Canon, and others of much higher character left out. (Compare, for example, *Ecclesiastes* and the *Wisdom of Solomon*.) And with the development of the New Testament Canon we find a process answering to this, as face answereth to face in water. Not until 397 A.D. do we find all the books of the

New Testament included in an authoritative list, some of them then against the judgment of the most earnest scholars, while others, more in general favor, were left out. We find books repudiated or questioned for centuries finally accepted for ecclesiastical reasons, without conviction of their authentic character. To predicate a special inspiration or infallibility of a collection of sixty-six books made up in this manner invites the scorn of Ingersoll and the righteous indignation of all just and honorable men. And for whom do the right reverend bishops imagine themselves writing when they oppose to such considerations as a "strong and clear statement of the inspiration of the whole Canon" the words of Paul in Romans, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning"? What have these words to do with infallible inspiration? What have they to do with "the whole Canon"? In 59 A.D., when Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans, how much of the New Testament was written? Paul's own Epistles to the Thessalonians, Galatians, and Corinthians. No more. The New Testament did not exist, even for his imagination. Surely, all Episcopalians are not such "babes in Christ" that such baby-talk as this can be palmed off on them for rational argument. It ought to raise a storm of indignation among the intelligent and self-respecting sort that would smite this Pastoral as with fire from heaven, and shrivel it to formless soot.

Hardly less offensive than the puerility of its arguments is the pretence of welcome to the learned scholar, while prescribing the bounds he must not overpass. For example, "Any instruction or study which makes any part of the Bible *less authoritative than it really is* ["O learned judge!"]", which weakens faith in its inspiration, which tends to eliminate Christ from the utterances of the Prophets, . . . is a pernicious instruction and a pernicious study." To "eliminate Christ from the utterances of the Prophets" means to deny that there are veritable predictions of Jesus in the Old Testament prophecies. It is now sixty years since my beloved teacher, Dr. Noyes, made this denial with absolute frankness

and abundant proof of the soundness of his position. Hundreds of scholars of the highest rank have done it since his day. And their "pernicious instruction," as the bishops call it, is such as must appeal to every intelligent and right-minded person who compares the New Testament fulfilments with the Old Testament passages in a spirit of devout sincerity, uncommitted in advance to the traditional view. To pretend that there is anything of "irreverent rashness or unscientific method" in the criticism which has completely "eliminated Christ from the utterances of the Prophets," in the sense intended by the bishops, is to do that which reflects far more injuriously on those who do it than on the victims of their solemn frown.

Other particulars invite me ; but I must resist their urgency, and conclude my sermon with a few general considerations. We have heard much of the liberality of the Episcopal Church. We have had personal knowledge of clerical and lay examples of it not a few. We have known more of the latter because so many Unitarians have of late years passed into the Episcopal Church ; and these have assured us that they have not been troubled by the expression of irrational opinions. When they have told their rector, "I do not understand the Trinity," he has answered them, "I'd like to know who does" ; and, when they have told him of other doubts and questionings, he has made answer, "Now don't you worry about that" : all of which easy-going and good-natured business is now ruthlessly confronted with the clear intimations of the Bishops' Letter as to what good Episcopalians are expected to believe : the incarnation, as involving the virgin-birth of Jesus, original sin, the impurity and baseness of all natural maternity, sacrificial atonement by the death of the God-man on the cross, his physical resurrection from the dead, and his ascension into heaven "with his body, flesh, and bones," the miraculous inspiration of the Bible, and the infallible inspiration of the creeds, with the rejection of the whole body of criticism which has been patiently wrought out by a century of

scholarship as sincere and faithful as the world has ever known. If any one imagines that in any of these particulars I exaggerate the terms of the Pastoral, let him procure a copy, read, con, and inwardly digest it, and then tell me what he thinks. Seeing that these things are so, there ought, I think, to be straightway an exodus from the Episcopal Church of all those who have been laboring under the illusion that its liberality is such as to justify them in their allegiance and support. I am well aware that no constraint will be put upon them, that they take no ordination vows binding them to believe what has been published as the Church's only creed. But can they avoid the construction that by passive acquiescence in this declaration they subscribe to it to all intents and purposes; they give to it, and to the arrogant assumption of spiritual power which it involves, the benefit of their approval and consent? Do I expect any such exodus? I certainly do not. For, if the people born and bred in liberal churches, who have swarmed into the Episcopal Church during the last dozen or twenty years, had had any capacity for clear thinking, any courage of personal conviction, they would never have lent themselves to the encouragement of a polity and worship which imply in every part a doctrine wholly at variance with a rational conception of the course of history and the realities of the spiritual life.

And how about the course demanded by this Letter of those who are the ordained priests and ministers of the Episcopal Church, but who believe the doctrines of the Pastoral, and allow its claims of spiritual supremacy, hardly more than you or I? Their case is different from that of the laity. They are bound by their ordination vows to teach those things which the bishops, "under the guidance of the Holy Ghost," have duly set forth. Must they go forth, like Abraham, not knowing whither? I say not so. But one thing is sure: that they must do this, or else at once adopt the only possible alternative, which is to openly avow their disagreement with the terms and spirit of the Episcopal en-

cyclical, and pledge and band themselves to do whatever in them lies to have the document expunged from the records of their Church. One or the other of these two things they must do, to justify themselves to their own consciences and in the eyes of men of downright honesty. I know very well that some of these men will tell me that I am taking the matter much too seriously. They will call my attention to Bishop Potter, who has already spoken of the Pastoral in the minimizing way in which Horace Greeley was accustomed to speak of his own letters of recommendation. They will say it was a sop to Cerberus, meaning to Bishop Seymour, who was roaring hungrily for something of this sort; and that it will be a *brutum fulmen*, a nine days' wonder, then straightway forgotten. It ought not so to be. It has been published with no little accent of ecclesiastical authority; and it should be heeded and obeyed by those whose minds and hearts it finds responsive to its claims, and manfully rejected and opposed by those who find in it an exaggeration of dogma and authority repulsive to their intelligence, their conscience, and their self-respect.

And now I wish I could go on, and in comparison with the doctrines of incarnation, atonement, inspiration, and so on, promulgated in the Bishops' Pastoral, set forth those of our Unitarian faith, that you might see how much grander and nobler and higher and better and truer and sweeter these are than the others, and invite for them your utmost loyalty of word and deed. But what need is there for me to do anything of this kind? You know in Whom and what you have believed; and you know that in proportion to the breadth and height of your convictions will be your dishonor and your shame if you do not find in them the inspiration to a loyal service of both God and man.

A BETTER RESURRECTION.*

THERE is something in human nature which makes men almost envious of others' happiness, if they cannot share it, if they cannot have some corresponding happiness of their own. Others may be more generous, but it is so with me. When other people have a holiday, I always have one in my blood. I should like to celebrate all the holidays after some fashion of my own. Let me hear the music on St. Patrick's Day, and I remember what John Milton said about its being an impiety to labor over books from the year's turn in spring until the autumn equinox, and seize the first excuse to cut away upon some private festival. Here is the explanation of so many vigorous attempts on the part of rational religionists to put new wine into the Easter bottles, and impart a new meaning to the ancient holiday. They have broken altogether with the old meaning, but they do not like to give up the Easter gladness. Some, I am obliged to say, quite overstrain the bounds of perfect honesty and veracity, and engage in forms of speech and song abounding in direct statements and implications which do not fairly represent their thought. Others, who cannot do these things, but who still wish to take a not dishonest part in the universal joy, avail themselves of the natural joyousness which always stirs men's hearts with the return of spring. They endeavor to express this joyousness in sentences and songs. They ransack all the Scriptures and the poets to this end. They bring out of their treasure things both new and old; and the result is sometimes very beautiful.

* Epistle to the Hebrews xi. 35.

But supernatural Christianity is critical and jealous of these new interpretations. The rational religionist is accused of making the venerable holiday a depository of sentiments and ideas foreign to its habitual contents. But he in turn can claim that his sentiments and ideas are more venerable than those which he discards. The Christian festival cannot be named without bringing back the memory of times when the All-Father of our Saxon and Teutonic ancestors had not yet succumbed to the Old Testament Jehovah and the Heavenly Father of the New, and when "Balder, the Beautiful, is dead, is dead!" was a lament as yet unsung. Among the beautiful and strong divinities of that early time, divorced from worship in our time only to be married to immortal verse, and from their cairns, which Time had heaped with a remorseless hand, rising more beautiful than ever in Wagner's music and in the work of many an artist's brush or plastic hand,—one of the host of these divinities was Eostra, goddess of the spring. She had her day of festival; and, when it came, men worshipped her with joyous rites, wreathing her shrines and greeting her with dance and song. It was the symbol of men's satisfaction in the unfailing freshness of the world, its resurrection from the winter's seeming death into the life of grass and flowers and every growing thing. It is with an ill grace that the traditional Christianity charges the rationalist with seeking to divert the Easter festival from its original meaning. Did not Christianity economize the December feasts of the old Roman worship to improve its Christmas cheer? Did it not equally economize the gladness of the Teutonic Easter, and rob it of its very name to deck the altars of its risen Lord? The rational religionist, who would fain make the Easter festival embody something of the natural joy of men in Nature's reawakening, has better warrant for his course than had Christianity in either of these instances; for he is falling back on the original significance of the bright and happy time. He is conservative and orthodox where the churches are innovating and heretical. Thinking of all these things,

not long ago, I made my thought of them into a little poem to Eostra. And thus it went : —

Goddess of the early days,
When the world was fresh and young,
Whom our fathers loved to praise,
Whom they worshipped, whom they sung:
Art thou nothing in our time
But the heading of a rhyme?

Dying, thou didst give thy name
To the Christian's feast of life,—
Feast that celebrates the fame
Of an hour with wonders rife,—
Hour that wrought of death the doom,
When was rent the sacred tomb.

They that trust the wondrous tale,
They that keep the happy time,
Have for thee no gracious "Hail!"
Have for thee no tuneful rhyme;
Thankless even for thy name,
For their day of joyous fame.

But whenever hearts are fain
For the winter past away,
When the springtime once again
Makes them happy, makes them gay,
Goddess bright, thy name is sung
Now as when the world was young.

A better resurrection! Surely, the newest, which is at the same time the oldest, meaning of the day is better than the traditional meaning of the Christian Church which has so long usurped its place. The beneficent order of the world, the everlasting faithfulness, is better than any supernatural event. Whether or not we set apart a certain time, Easter or any other, to celebrate our joy in nature's reawakening, we celebrate it each and all. When, a few days ago, it seemed as if the spring had really come, was there not universal joy? The uprising flood of life broke down the barriers of conventionality, and perfect strangers on the

street-cars and the trains exchanged congratulations on the beautiful event. Our natural pulse anticipates the wind-flowers and the violets, and is impatient if they delay ever so little. And then, how interesting and how beautiful is man's co-operation with the changing year!—the long straight furrows with the potatoes dropped in them and the farmer burying them tenderly in the hope of a better resurrection than they have had some seasons heretofore; the glossy surfaces of the damper soils the plough has just upturned; and everywhere the quiet confidence of preparation for the bounty of another year. One must be dull indeed whose heart does not leap up when it beholds these things by which we are related in the humblest aspects of our life to the great order of the solar universe. How petty all our theological disputes in the presence of this natural miracle of the transfigured earth! How little difference it makes by what name we call the Infinite Power which now, upon a thousand hills, along a thousand streams, is busy turning the sods to violets and working the million-fold enchantments of the time! Enough for us to know that this Power, however named, is adequate for the accomplishment of all these things,—not here alone, but in I know not what myriads of other worlds, each in its own order. How can we be loud enough in our jubilation,—nay, how can we be still enough in our reverence,—as we listen to this wonderful song of the earth, and the world singing in unison, plying their silent looms and weaving as they sing the living garment of the Almighty Power? Oh, surely, it is worth while to suffer many things, and to be powerless for the answering of many questions, and to be set about with many mysteries, in order, with full hearts, to realize this joy of immanent life at work in tree and flower, whose subtile operation soon will clothe the fields with more than emerald green and flush the orchards and the meadows thick with bloom!

“There is no bard in all the choir,
Not Homer's self, the poet sire,

Wise Milton's odes of pensive pleasure,
Or Shakspeare, whom no mind can measure :
Nor Collins' verse of tender pain,
Nor Byron's clarion of disdain,
Scott, the delight of generous boys,
Or Wordsworth, Pan's recording voice,—
Not one of all could put in verse,
Or to this presence could rehearse,
The sights and voices ravishing
We know upon the hills in spring."

I cannot but believe that the resurrection of the year is a much better resurrection than the resurrection of the body of Jesus from the grave. I pause not here to set forth the inadequacy of the argument for the historic fact. Those of you who know anything of the course of my preaching here know that that argument is for me entirely insufficient to prove anything more (if I should not say anything less) than some great personal experience through which the first disciples passed from death to life, from despair to hope and cheer. But, were the resurrection of Jesus as well established as any fact of history or any principle of mathematics, no inference could be more invalid than the inference from this of the general immortality of mankind; for it is conceded that his resurrection was in virtue of his superhuman character; and how does the resurrection of a superhuman being, in virtue of his superhuman character, establish the resurrection of beings who are not superhuman? Because a diamond does not melt below the melting point of silver, shall we put our ice into the oven? Moreover, the resurrection of Jesus was thirty-six hours after his death. The integrity of his body had not yet been marred. But how about the bodies that have been mixed with nature ten, twenty, fifty, or one hundred thousand years? And then, too, although we would not be unclothed, but clothed upon, though we may have no sympathy with those whose aspiration is for a wholly disembodied state, much preferring a body of some sort, yet is the resurrection of this mortal body not a consummation to be wished. True, at its

best it is a wonder of organic workmanship and of incomparable beauty. True, we cannot conceive of any body that should be more wonderful than this, as the anatomist and physiologist have made it known to us, as the painter and the sculptor have acquainted us with its ideal comeliness and purity and grace. But, if the years of our life are threescore years and ten, or even, by reason of strength, fourscore years, our bodies are worn out when they give up the spirit. The resurrection of the body would be a premium upon general suicide in the full tide of manhood's early strength; for, surely, we should want the body in which our immortal spirits were to dwell forever to be no "soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed," but the most perfect habitation it had here enjoyed. The conclusion of the whole matter is that, were the resurrection of the body an object of rational belief, it would not be an object to desire, and that, even if the resurrection of Jesus could be established by historic evidence, it would prove no general resurrection, while, furthermore, the historic evidence for it is so unsound that to base any general conclusion on it would be a piece of intellectual criminality.

In a *Tribune* editorial of this very day (April 14) I find an interesting comment on all this. It is as follows: "In the churches this morning there will be much said about 'the blessed hope of immortality,' but we doubt if a single preacher will declare that the atoms of the identical, physical body that was laid in the grave will be brought together again and dowered with an immortal existence." The *Tribune* underrates, I think, the capacity for imbecility that is latent in the average pulpiteer. But, however this may be, if the bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead proves anything, it proves a similar resurrection of mankind in general. It has not a word to say concerning the natural immortality of the soul.

The resurrection of the year from winter's seeming death is a much better resurrection than the resurrection of the body of Jesus from its rock-hewn sepulchre; but it is not

the only resurrection that is better than that. Another is that very real resurrection of the body which corresponds to the development of scientific thought in recent times,—a development which has brought us *through* materialism into that larger knowledge in whose strength we say, “If life and thought are the flower of matter, then any definition of matter which omits life and thought must be inadequate, if not untrue.”* Matter, the body of the universe, is rising from the grave of dualistic thought, with her face like sunshine, and her garments white as snow. No contemptuous word concerning it is in order now. It is so full of mystery, so full of life, so full of Deity, that we speak of it almost with bated breath,—almost as if we dared not utter an ineffable name. And man’s material substance shares in all the newly acquired dignities and honors of the material world.

Meantime the mental physiologist has collected thousands of facts showing how intimate is the relation of the body and the mind, what bias there is in a man’s tissues for his thought and his morality. Whereupon good men and women put their fingers in their ears. They will not listen to such blasphemy. It is materializing mind, materializing morals, they insist, to acknowledge such relations. Well, this is one way of looking at it; but there is another. The fact is the great thing; and the fact is that thought and morals are conditioned to an immense degree by physical conditions. But there are two ways of reading this fact, if the good people did but know it. It can be read as the materialization of intellect and morals. It can also be read as the spiritualization of brains and stomachs, muscles and nerves, air and light, molecules and atoms. Why not read it in this way, if you do not like the other? It is perfectly legitimate. This materialism, as men call it, imparts a transcendental significance to every circumstance of physical well-being. Mind and morals are exactly what they were before. Only the body of man, through the perception of its intimate connection with his mind and heart and will, is im-

* Professor Tyndall, “Hours of Exercise in the Alps.”

measurably advanced in dignity and honor. Here is a better resurrection,—a resurrection of the body which has no ridiculous or intolerable implications. It is a doctrine that gives a new and vastly higher meaning to those great words of the apostle when he said: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

To the resurrection of the year in the new life of spring, and the resurrection of the body from the grave of contumely and disdain in which a crude philosophy had buried it for centuries, add next the resurrection of Jesus from the grave of theological misconception, in which his burial has not been a matter of two days, but a matter of eighteen centuries. Even the New Testament writers are grave-diggers all. They bury the man Jesus under a multitude of texts. The different Gospels and Epistles mark the stages of this inhumation. In Matthew the man is not a little visible. In John the New Testament cycle is completed, and scarcely a trace of him remains. Misconception and exaggeration had now done their part. Theological speculation had still its part to do. And, oh, it did it well! Even the Jewish Messiahship, which had first obscured his personality, was now compelled to share his fate. Jesus of Nazareth was transfigured into the infinite God. For a thousand years and more the human Jesus perished almost entirely from men's thought and life. It seemed impossible that he should ever enter it again. But, with God and man co-operant, all things are possible.

And of these two co-operant came in time the modern spirit, the spirit of scientific thought and study and investigation. What wonders has it not accomplished in the five centuries that have elapsed since first it showed itself in Italy in answer to men's prayers for what in a thousand years of intellectual impoverishment they had come to desire! It has secularized politics and industry and art and education. It has made religious persecution an evil memory. It has re-

vised the records of mankind. It has eliminated miracle. It has established law. And it has been the angel of the resurrection to the long-buried Jesus of Nazareth. It has rolled away the door from his sepulchre. It has commanded him to come forth. The resurrection of Jesus, so long a baseless superstition, is a contemporary fact. The poor spear-wounded body was mixed long ago with kindred dust "in the lorn Syrian town." The present resurrection is the resurrection of the human spirit of the Great Teacher and Inspirer, his sweet human fame. Vanishes God and demi-God and supernatural Messiah. Good speed! Good speed! For, as they vanish, *Ecce Homo!*—Behold the man!

Let us be perfectly sincere, and attempt no disguising of the fact that, when constructive criticism has done its best with the New Testament records, it is not to be hoped that we shall arrive at a detailed, consecutive, and exhaustive representation of the actual Jesus,—what he said and what he did and what he was. But the great men of the past can seldom serve as much by precept or example. With circumstances changed, we need new precepts, new examples. It is by inspiration and suggestion that the great men of the past best serve the present time's most pressing need. And these are not dependent on our knowledge of the minute details of personal history. What is as sure as need be concerning the risen Jesus is that he was a hearty lover of his kind; that he felt a wonderful compassion for the sinful and the sorrowing; that, above all things, he abhorred self-righteousness and hypocrisy, that he was indifferent to all forms of ceremony or worship, so that the life was just and pure and merciful; and that he bruised himself to death against the harsh indifference of his countrymen to those realities of life and love which were his all in all. Our hearts may well burn within us on this Easter morning as we talk with this risen Jesus by the way.

To the resurrection of the year from winter's frozen grave, and the resurrection of the body from the contempt of

philosophical misunderstanding, and the resurrection of the human Jesus from his long burial under mountainous piles of theological misconception, add the resurrection of the spirit from the body's wreck into the power and glory of a never-ending life. If in our time there is in many minds, and those among the best, a certain inability to lay hold of this with noble confidence, I am obliged to think that it is because the paths which naturally lead to it have so long been overgrown with various tangle and made impassable by long neglect. It is because the energy that should have gone to the discovery of the soul's true character and history and destiny has gone to the defence of a position infinitely weaker than the immortality of the soul. This has been argued from the supernatural resurrection of Jesus from the dead, when, in truth, to prove that resurrection is a much more difficult matter than to prove the immortality of the soul. There are a hundred reasons for believing in the latter, where there is not one for believing in the former. But, so long as the supernatural event was the one ground of hope and joyful expectation, all other arguments were discouraged. What is called Natural Theology, the inference of God and immortality from the regular order of the world, was thought hardly less than criminal one or two centuries ago. It is not fifty years since Unitarian ministers expended their best strength in proving that without a supernatural revelation men had no reason whatsoever for belief in God or the Immortal Life. But, since the traditional ground of faith has been disintegrated by the throes of critical inquiry, it is remarkable how generous has been the purely scientific contribution to the belief in personal immortality. So generous has been this contribution that it looks very much as if the "oppositions of science" to this belief had been "falsely so called"; as if they were the mere reflections of the theologians' depreciation of a method which must be discouraged, or it would make their own less singular and exclusive than they must keep it if they would not find their occupation gone.

Meantime the doctrine of Browning is deserving of consideration; namely, that the highest religious attitude is not that of dogmatic certainty, but that of hope and trust. And this most religious attitude is not contravened or questioned by any embodiment of the scientific spirit. The more we know, the more we do, the more we love, the more we are, the more we crave the opportunity of the immortal years. My friend would fain convince me that there is something miserably selfish and grasping in this attitude. He tells me that, if I get sixty or seventy years of life in such a world as this, I ought to be entirely satisfied, and not go round whining and clamoring for more. And, if I wanted to stay on indefinitely at this mortal feast, and grudged my place to any one of the innumerable company that is surging up to it, new thousands every day, then I should feel that he is right. But, in the boundless spaces of the infinite, I believe that there is room for all, and everything they need, and that I can go on forever without defrauding any other of his rightful share. And when did much not ask for more? When did the first chapter of the beautiful story, the first act of the glorious play, the first mile of the happy journey, ever seem enough to any hungry heart? It is because we believe so heartily in the fulness of God that we want to see it out, that we want "the glory of going on and to be." And then, too, there are some of us, I trust and know, whose hope of the immortal life is nourished less, far less, by their own abundance than by others' lack. Grant that the rich and favored ought to be content with what they get upon this hither side of death, how is it about those for whom disease and want and treachery have been their daily food? If God is good and not incompetent, there must be immortality for these, for all that we can see.

I remember very well how sure I felt of this, once on a time, when I was reading one of the most beautiful and affecting books, and certainly one of the most tragical, that I have ever known. When I had finished it with a bursting heart, I said: "Yes, oh, my God, these dreadful things can

be. They are no vain imaginations of one Thomas Hardy's brain. And, if such things can be, then God, if thou art God, give the poor souls who have been bruised and flailed by all the scourges of intolerable wrong a chance somewhere to right themselves and see the glory of thy world. Suffer if thou wilt thy holy ones to see corruption, thy happy, favored ones to lie in cold obstruction and to rot; but these, thy crushed and bleeding ones, suffer them not to die forever until thou hast saved them from despair and shown them how to live." And, if the Eternal can deny my prayer, I am so glad that I shall never know how faithless he can be; and I will trust him to the end.

One other resurrection better than any named so far, the best of all, remains. It is a resurrection which to Paul, there in the New Testament, was more and better than the bodily resurrection of Jesus and his saints which was to him so much. It is no supernatural miracle, and yet it is most wonderful. It is the resurrection from the grave, the hell, of selfishness and meanness and ingratitude and intemperance and impurity and filthy lusts into the light and air, the peace and heaven, of all pure affections and all good desires, all noble doing of the things we know we ought to do. Let us believe in other resurrections as we may or must; but woe is unto us if we do not believe in this! Better a thousand times to feel, or know, if that were possible, that our root dies with our stalk, our spirit with our body, than not to feel the power and beauty of that spiritual resurrection which has its bright examples all about us all the time, than not to feel that we ourselves can "rise on stepping-stones of our dead selves to higher things," and that we have so risen in some appreciable degree. But, if we make this better resurrection ours, the resurrection of the spring shall be for us more sweet and fair; the resurrection of the body through obedience to its holy laws shall be a glorious reality; the resurrection of Jesus in the power and grace of simple manhood shall be something we can better understand; and the res-

urrection of the immortal soul shall be a destiny of which we shall at least be worthy, even if we are not sure of the event.

“ So let him wait God’s instant men call years,
Meantime hold hard by truth and his great soul,
Do out the duty ! By such souls alone
God, stooping, shows sufficient of his light
For us in the dark to rise by. And I rise.”





